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# **NETAJI SPEAKS TO THE NATION**

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A Symposium of important speeches and writings of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose (1928-45) His broadcasts, addresses, orders of the day from Berlin, Tokyo, Rangoon, Syonan and Burma with proper introductions surveying the history of the period when they were delivered or written.

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The present book is a survey of the history of the Youth Movement in India as expounded by Shyt. Subhas Chandra Bose, Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru, Shyt. Sarat Chandra Bose, Mr. K. F. Nariman, Prof. T. L. Vaswani Shrimati Kamla Devi Chattopadhyaya and other youth leaders in their addresses and speeches delivered from time to time since 1928 in the students and youth gatherings.

What were the various phases through which the youth movement passed; what is the spirit that worked behind the youth movement in India; what is the real message that their leaders have to tell is clearly shown in the pages of this book.

# TO THE YOUTH OF MY COUNTRY

*Being the survey of the history of the Youth Movement  
in India as expounded in their addresses by Netaji  
Subhas Chandra Bose, Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru,  
Mr. Sarat Chandra Bose, Mr. K. F.  
Nariman, Shrimati Kamla Devi  
Chattopadhyaya, Prof. T. L.  
Vaswani, Dr. Raman, Mr.  
Sanyal and other  
youth leaders.*

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Edited by :—  
DURLAB SINGH

1946

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## PREFACE

The present volume is not a regular history of the Youth Movement in India. It is only a collection of some significant speeches and addresses of some of the top-most youth leaders delivered by them in the hey-days of the youth movement in India.

The left wing in India was never so strong as in 1928 and 1929. Although there had been off hand gatherings of the youth in certain parts of the country, yet, because there was no central organisation existing anywhere their voice as an independent entity in the higher politics of the nation could not be recognised until 1928 and 1929 when Naujwan Bharat Sabha was formed and youth movement took an organised shape. There were signs of youth uprising during the partition days in Bengal no doubt, and also in Maharashtra and the Punjab in 1907 when the Great Maharashtra Leader Lokmanya Bal Ganga Tilak and S. Ajit Singh and Lala Lajpat Rai preached a new gospel to the youth and the students but we cannot call these upheavals as youth movements in the constitutional sense of the term.

The constitutional politics of the youth and students in the words of Subhas Bose were the result of "a feeling of dissatisfaction with the existing order of

will prove to be a source of inspiration for the future heirs of free India and help in removing confusion from the minds of the students, desirous of taking part in the politics

Jai Hind.

Lahore,

DURLAB SINGH

10th May 1946.

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*"Any association of young men or of women does not deserve the designation of youth association. A social service league or a famine relief society is not necessarily a Youth association. A Youth association is characterised by a feeling of dissatisfaction with the present order of things, the desire for a better order accompanied by a vision of that order. Youth Movements are not reformist in outlook but revolutionary. A feeling of restlessness—of impatience with the present order, must come into existence before any Movement can start. Personally I do not consider this Movement of to-day to be a twentieth century phenomenon or an accidental phenomenon. This is true of every age and every clime. From the time of Socrates and Buddha, men have been inspired by a vision of a better world and under that inspiration have endeavoured to reconstruct society. The Movements of the modern age are characterised by a similar vision and a similar effort. Whether it is Bolshevism in Russia or Fascism in Italy or of the Young Turk movement in Turkey—whether it is a movement in China or in Persia or in Germany, everywhere you will find the same vision and the same objective. Wherever the older generation of leaders have failed, Youth have become self conscious and have taken upon themselves the responsibility of reconstructing society and of guiding it on towards a better and nobler state of existence.*

**SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE**



*"India is an epitome of the world. India's problems, are world-problems in miniature. The solution of India's problems is therefore solution of world-problems. India lives to-day in spite of untold suffering and misery and in spite of numerous invasions—because she has a mission to fulfil. India has to save herself because by saving herself, she will save the world. India has to attain freedom because a free India will be able to make a suitable contribution to the culture and civilization of the world. The world is anxiously awaiting India's gift. Without that, the world will be all the poorer.*

*"Friends, our responsibility is great, in every age, in every clime. Youths have been the torch-bearers of liberty. We have to live up to the example of youths abroad. What they have achieved elsewhere, certainly the Youth of India can achieve here if only we rise to the occasion. We are living in momentous times and the fate of India is in the hands of the Youths. I have no doubt that the Youths of this country realise the great responsibility that rests on them. I have no doubt that through their sacrifice, suffering and labour India will before long be a free country—a country where men and women will born free and will have equal opportunities for education and development. India shall be free—of that there is not the slightest doubt. The only question is, when she will be free. We have all been born slaves but let us all resolve to die as free men. And if we are not to see India free in our own life-time let us at least die in the attempt to free India—The Path to freedom is a thorny path—but is also the path to immortality. To this noble path I invite you—my sisters and brothers*

**SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE**

*" In all countries, either Asiatic or European, youth have played and are still playing a prominent part in the political, social and economic revolution that has brought about a regeneration or restoration of fallen nations or oppressed countries.*

*" The economic revival of Germany after the Great War was no doubt due to the strenuous efforts of the youth. The political emancipation of Ireland was the result of concerted and well-equipped youth organisation of that country. In the Egyptian struggle for independence the youth again are the standard bearers of National honour and National freedom. The Fascist movement in Italy is but another phase of universal activity as the young Turks and Afghan is selecting against the old enervating customs and superstitions of their respective countries. But the most recent and perhaps the most inspiring of all examples is that of China, and the achievements of young Nationalist China are one of the most wonderful political phenomena of modern times.*

*" Thus when the youth of all civilized countries in the world is awakened and carrying on incessant struggle and rebellion against all the existing evils and stagnation, even when the Afghan youth, who but yesterday was considered as belonging to a semi-civilized and fanatic hill tribe, is up and has joined the general ranks and file of the youth reformers of the world, is it conceivable that the Indian youth alone should lag behind? Nay that is not possible. The time has come, indeed it is long past, when the energetic spirits, enthusiastic and patriotic youth in India is also expected to awake and shake off the paralysing effects of long lethargy and join his youthful comrades in the world, to do service to his dear motherland and to help and co-operate in reshaping his country and thus, in reconstructing the world."*

**K. F. NARIMAN**

## INDIA AND THE WORLD YOUTH

It is necessary to define here the meaning and the courses of economic domination, commonly known as imperialism, which, you will all admit has ever been the outstanding cause of all wars in the last few centuries.

The conditions of affairs in my unfortunate country after more than a century and a half of the rule of British imperialism will, I am sure, convince any honest person of the disastrous and dangerous effects of this form of organised plunder and scientific free-bootery. You will easily realise how the permanent peace of the world is impossible without a complete removal of all forms of Imperialism.

We are a nation of 320 millions of people. More than half of the population, and it will not be very far from truth if I say 80 per cent. of the people, hardly get two

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Mr. Sanyal's Speech at The World Youth Peace Congress  
held at Eerde, Ommen, Holland on the 19th August, 1928.

square meals a day. Nearly the same number fails to clothe themselves properly and the condition of housing cannot even be imagined by you in this part of the world. More men die in one year from one disease — "Malaria"—in my province of Bengal alone, than the number sacrificed per annum in the last great war. Taking India as a whole every 5 seconds one of my countrymen is seeking eternal peace. In parts of the big cities more than 300 infants die out of every 1000 born.

Only 9 percent of the people are literate in British India while in some of these native states literacy is as large as 65 to 70 per cent. There is no political power of the people and the whole governmental machinery is callous to all sense of responsibility to the sons of the soil. And all this is not due to any inherent physical or cultural defects of the people, nor on account of the inadequacy of natural resources. The plunder of India set in motion the mills of Paisley and Manchester and it is a matter of common knowledge that the wealth of any country attracted always the traders and exploiters from all parts of the world.

In the domains of culture India has contributed some of the finest thoughts and has a tradition which many of your western countries would be proud to possess. In its place to-day there is nothing more left than a starving, dehumanised mass of men who have hardly a consciousness of life itself.

The condition of youth in such a country can only

be imagined. Unemployment is acute in all spheres of life. The economic circumstances have shaken the whole fabric of society and stark poverty and ignorance prevent any work of reconstruction. The few educated young men who feel it their duty to set themselves to the service of the people are at every step hindered in their work by the agents of the repressive government. If they dare to question the methods of the bureaucracy or even when they rise above the ordinary and are likely to be troublesome to the irresponsible Government the whole machinery of repression is levelled against them. Youngmen are arrested without warrant and are detained in jail without trial and without even allowing them to know why they are imprisoned. The period of such detention has extended to upwards of three years and many have perished unknown and unwept in unknown corners of Prisons—sometimes far away from their own districts. The few that manage to survive this oppression are ever crippled physically and economically and are forced to sacrifice their ideal of service. This same tragic tale is met with every where—in Egypt, in China, in Mexico, Nicaragua, Morocco, Indonesia and in all parts of Africa.

How can you expect to establish world-peace and unite the whole youth of the world so long as such conditions prevail?

An English friend questioned the veracity of my statements. Yes! They are so horrible that they seem quite incredible. I invite him to be convinced with

facts quoted from Government records and from the writings of British historians. A search for truth pays and I challenge anyone to disprove me. My education that enables me to speak here has been cited as instance of the benefits of British rule. But, I believe, that, in itself, is the greatest condemnation of Imperialism. I had an average intelligence as any of you, but on account of the narrow imperial culture that has been permitted to dominate the whole sphere of life in India, I can speak but one language here. The whole of the non-English speaking western world, their achievements, history and culture, have been kept away from the Indian Youth! I cannot come into more intimate contact with many of you as I would.

Will you help us in breaking the barriers and enable us to stand by your side as brothers and sisters and work with you in the achievement of that one end - the end of peace and love - which is the only foundation on which the kingdom of heaven can be constructed on this earth.

If you choose to take up the cause of justice and righteousness in order to secure living peace - not the peace of a dead and inert physical matter - I ask you to give your most serious attention to this aspect of the question, and I know your youth will give you the necessary strength to stand up against all odds and to declare your determination to establish equality, freedom, and lasting peace among the free and self determining nations of the world. The complaint is made that the

outlook of oriental youth is still confined to nationalism. Will you not help them to rise above their narrowness and to realise that ideal of universal love and brotherhood which is one of the noblest heritage of the East ?

For the attainment of peace Imperialism must go. It has created havoc not only upon the oppressed countries, but the demoralisation that has followed upon its practice in the seemingly prosperous countries of Europe and America, is no less acute. The whole outlook on life in the west has been tainted with the false idea that the value of man depends upon his consumption. The economic measure of the standard of life of the individual has been defined to be the extent of his expenditure. The social value of the man has thus been completely ignored and the entire structure of existence has been constructed on rather shaky foundations. The real value of a man should be the true measure of his standard of life. This is his contribution to society, material and non-material, less his consumption. If we built our economic ideas on this basis we will not need at all a man like Budha or Tolstoi, a man of low standard of life. With the removal of individual exploitation the tendencies for economic domination will disappear.

Some friends have asked us to rely on the League of Nations. What is the character of the League now ? It is a travesty of truth to call it a " League of Nations " when it is, as you all know, merely a League of diplomats, of pirates that are anxious to maintain their position of eminence through conspiracy and through

mutual share of the booty. Has the cause of righteousness and peace been advanced by an iota by this organization of ever suspicious ministers ?

Nearly 150 Conferences on disarmament will give you the answer. About the operations in the oriental countries, in the colonies, and even on smaller European States, our friends ought to know, that the League has no jurisdiction. The specific instances of Britain's conduct towards Egypt a few months ago, and the outrages on China, Iraq, Morocco and at Tyrol will, I trust, convince my friends of the helplessness of oppressed peoples under the rule of the League. To those that are very optimistic about the future I have only one thing to say that this heavy edifice of international justice cannot be built on this weak foundation. India is proclaimed as a member of the League in some respects. Do you know that Indian people cannot have even a word at the selection of "their" representative ? The member when he sits is not free to vote on the League, and the weight of India is only misused by Great Britain against the other participants on the commission. The Mandate policy has afforded only another opportunity for the Big Powers to oppress the weak, small nationalities, when any *serious question* affecting the interest of the Big Powers crops up and when these disagree, the Mandate Commission becomes powerless.

Under the cloak of the Mandate do you realise that a Middle East Empire has grown up out of the last World-War ? Do you seriously believe that such an agreement can even secure peace ?



We have come all the way at your invitation with the hope and expectation that you will give your fullest consideration to the matter and make it possible for East and West to meet together not with a spirit of suspicion and fear as our diplomats have often met, but with real sympathy and fraternity, we want a definite lead from you. Advise us what we should do and think seriously of the responsibilities that you may be prepared to undertake on our behalf.

My friends of sincere convictions have placed before us numerous idealistic and realistic suggestions—Anarchists, Physiocrats, Social Democrats, Anti-Militarists, League of Nations enthusiasts, and last but not the least the Communists. None of these programmes appeal to us as practical propositions, and some appear to be fundamentally contradictory to eastern conditions. The only programme that has some credit of experiment behind it is that of the communists. It appeals to my head but fails to inspire any response from our hearts. It appears to me to ignore the natural and fundamental instincts of family and love. I am not afraid of the label, but I fail to understand how the superior position of one class over another can lead to everlasting peace. The success of the programme in the conditions of life in our country is also very doubtful.

Although my faith in human goodness and in the power of love becomes shaken when I look upon the sufferings of our people and our honest young persons, I

am still mustering courage to stick to the spirit of non-violence which has been propounded by our revered countryman, Mahatma Gandhi. Whether we shall have to forsake that faith and to seek that through communism, depends entirely on you, my friend in the imperialistic countries. We are only awaiting your reply and active response.

The power of imperialism lies in keeping the people in general in complete darkness about the real happenings in the oppressed countries. A few capitalists who alone benefit out of the exploitations and who in most of the western countries constitute the real power behind the state, misuse the powers of Government, and while they secure all the plunder the whole nation is put to disrepute. The most mischievous propaganda is carried on through the press to convey to the people and also to the youth a mutilated and garbled statement of affairs and what is the entire basis of existence of the capitalists becomes the "White Men's burden" for the masses. Cannot the youth of the west make up their mind to combat this state of affairs by securing and giving due publicity to the absolute truth about the happenings in the oppressed oriental countries and Africa? Are you mere idealists, who do not inspire confidence in us by your active work?

There are two more requests that I shall make. The strength of imperialism lies in militarism and in economic exploitation. What are you going to determine now henceforward in these respects? You do not certainly

expect the youth of the oppressed countries to sing hallelajah when your hayonets will stick into their breasts, when your cruisers will threaten Egypt and China to accept terms of a peace "proposals", and your aeroplanes will disturb the classic quiet of inoffensive Persia. Will it be too much to expect that you will refrain from joining in any army, navy, or air forces, specially those that may be utilised beyond the territorial jurisdictions of your respective countries? Will it not be possible for you to refuse your co-operation to your exploiting capitalists, merchants and industrialists?

If you only confine yourselves within a more reasonable way of life these things that we specifically make a request to you for will become easy. If your country cannot feed you we invite you to the East to make it your 'home' permanently, and by your example and work to infuse new life there. Your countrymen that have been there in the past went out simply to make money, and after securing as much as they could by means, fair or foul, came away. Their greed and hurry made them forget all sense of moral justice, their life in the East both of the man and the woman is one of the most reckless and vicious—both in social and personal affairs. When they came back after amassing some wealth they became the most reactionary and abominable members of European society under the gab of the name of gentleman. When you will make the East your home there will be no such danger—no fear for the East, in any way.

There can be no compromise with evil and talks of Dominion Status, etc., are a myth. Imperialism must be abolished in all its forms. There can be only two things in the world—domination or self-determination. India, Egypt, Africa, Nicaragua, Indonesia must have complete national independence. Self-Government in its worst form is preferable to good-Government, and therefore any change in the organization of the present bureaucratic arrangement will not give peace. The whole order of things requires change and reconstruction. Let us have our rights to bring food and clothing to our starving millions and make them realise that they are also human beings as you and I am.

I charge you with the sins of your forefathers and demand justice at the altar of youth, with a view to secure permanent peace of the world. The way to peace can be paved with righteousness, and when we will secure it we shall sing together, Om Santi, Om Santi, Om Santi.

## The Mission of the Youth

"Your immediate mission is national. It is now high time that you should decide whether India should be free or be a subject country of a foreign nation. *The fate o' unborn India depends upon your courage and sacrifice and our mother country calls upon you for vigorous and manly action* The eyes of all our countrymen, are now upon the youth of Kerala, because the social and economical iniquities under which the people of Kerala suffer are a stumbling block in the way of real political work in your province. *It is a national problem and it could be solved only by youngmen with burning patriotism which would face machine guns. Our liberty and national honour are in danger. If the young men of to-day would act bravely, national victory is certain. If you fail our children and grandchildren would curse you. Our cause is noble you may have to die in the struggle for freedom, but your memory would live.* Under the influence of the enemy of our national freedom, some of our own misguided countrymen may abuse us or stone us to death. But your country should be your idol and its service your religion, Swarajya your goal. British Imperialism, which keeps us in bondage, not only denies us our birth-right, but suppresses our

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Dr. Vardarajulu Naidu's Presidential Address at the First Kerala Youth Conference at Payyanur (Tellicherry district), on 27th May, 1928.

natural desire for our national growth and development. It has enslaved our body and mind and as a result, there are parties and individuals in this country, who are prepared to sell their national and individual honour for a job in the Government service.

“—Pledged to these ideals of political freedom and social justice, youngmen should organise themselves in small groups to promote and foster the growth of a United Indian Nation to remove all causes of inter-communal discord and separatist tendencies by vigourously working for the equality and liberty of men, by throwing overboard caste and creed distinctions. Youngmen should pledge headlong in to the national service unmindful of the consequences. You may perish in this struggle. India wants thousands of youngmen with love and life that Lakshmana offered to Sri Ramchandra in the Ramayana. *Wherever our national self respect is in danger, whenever the British attempts to tighten the grip over our country, youngmen should offer their services unsolicited.* Nationalism is the most potent power that would make you a brave soldier. It is a panacea for the weary spirit. Young men should look out and lose no time otherwise they shall fall behind in the race for National service. I ask every one of you assembled here to realise the greatest responsibility of a young man. *Indian Nation is in the making and the work is great; your path is full of thorns. Your sacrifices may go un-noticed and unrecognised and even un-heard of.* Our own countrymen would persecute you and belittle your great services.

### Dr. Raman's Speech

I visited Cambridge in the year 1921. I happened to be walking with Sir Earnest Rutherford, the great Physicist and was struck when I saw that in the middle of the day many of the young students of the University were playing tennis and other games. This somewhat shocked my susceptibilities as a scholar and I remarked "Sir Earnest, it seems to me that Cambridge is a place for play and not for study." Sir Earnest replied: "We do not seek in this University to produce book-worms. We seek to produce men who can govern an empire".

"Truely the function of a University is not to manufacture book-worms; it is to make men who can worthily hold their own in life and show that they are worthy sons of a worthy country. That is the function of a University. We, in India have no empires to govern; we have no colonies to rule. But we have our own country in which we seek to live—in which we seek to find expression for our national genius

"And so our Universities have to seek to perform

this task of training her sons and daughters so that they may be worthy citizens and find avocations in which they can bring happiness to themselves and honour to their country.

And so it is, that if you young students desire to have an education of the kind that is worth having you will have to feel that you are the architects of your own hands. You have to organise, you have to think out what kind of education you desire to have ; you will have to seek to create conditions which will secure for you the right type of education, the right kind of opportunities and the right kind of freedom for achievement.

*In the course of my travels abroad I had the privilege of visiting some of the Universities in Germany. To-day Germany is a country that is passing through circumstances of great difficulties. She has had to pay the penalty for the sins of her rulers. But one thing impressed me and that is the great spirit of her people, the great spirit of her young men, their determination to rise superior to all the difficulties and to show that Germany had a culture of her own, that she has an unquenchable thirst for knowledge—an indomitable spirit to assert herself and to show that, sooner or later, a time will come when Germany will have to be recognised as one of the foremost nations of her people—a great spirit. And, to my mind, this is an example, which we, in India, may do well to follow. The spirit of a people is best shown, not when they are triumphant*



What impressed me most was that there was not a single individual either in the Universities or outside them, who suffered from the spirit of defeatism ; there was no one who had developed the most dangerous of all complexes, the inferiority complex. Every where there was hope, that was confidence in the future of the motherland—a confidence that whatever might be her position to-day, a day would come when she would again secure her place under the sun. Now, my young friends, that is the spirit — the spirit of confidence that we have to strive to have and to develop.

Having lived 23 years of my life in Bengal, I know something of the great difficulties in which Bengal lives and suffers to-day. These difficulties I need not detail : these difficulties are disease, poverty and helplessness. These difficulties are great, they are serious. But I ask you : Do you intend to remain helpless and imagine that these difficulties are insurmountable and there is nothing that can be done to overcome them ? The spirit of defeatism—the spirit of the inferiority complex—that is the prelude to the death of the nation. The moment you feel that these circumstances cannot be set aside, cannot be overcome that moment it is as well to write yourselves down as an extinct nation. What you have to do is to look around and try to solve these problems in a small way, little by little, and to build up for yourselves happier environments in which the genius of the people can find free expression. Lessons of self-help self-realisation and self confidence—these will not be taught to you by the older men. These must come from

you from the spirit of youth. Youth—the unquenchable fire of youth—that is what can solve the problems of Bengal and not the cautious and halting counsels of the aged. At the same time, my young friends, I would like to emphasize that you should not be one sided in your activities. To my mind, one of the greatest necessities of to-day both in Bengal and India, is to realise the part in national welfare played by constructive intellectual activity.

What I am trying to bring home to you is this : There are two kinds of heroism, one kind of heroism is that which shows itself in the desire to do something all at once—the kind of heroism that led people to the last Great War to make the supreme sacrifice of their country. But there is a better kind of heroism, not of isolated action but the heroism that shows itself in the constant application to the daily task, in the inflexible determination to overcome difficulties and to create a new environment. That kind of heroism that shows itself in the will to sacrifice. What I desire to emphasize to you my young friends is this : Seek to assert yourselves, seek to create new environments for yourself by solid constructive work—work that can never allow itself to be diverted into this or that path but will go on the straight path with fixed concentration till the end is achieved. That is the kind of heroism that we in India need to-day that is the kind of heroism which, if it becomes, as it ought to be, a common phenomenon, will secure for India a place in the sun—the place that she desires.

Wherever, I went, there was at least in the circles in which I was privileged to move, a realisation that India, her great past and by her present position, had the

unquestioned right to develop her own culture for the continuation of the long and glorious history of her people. It was everywhere realised that we are not to be classed with the disappearing types of Bush Australians or Red Indians. We are a people who have the right to live and live in circumstances which we determine for ourselves. That feeling regarding India may not have found expression in the columns of the newspapers : but it is there in the intelligentsi of Europe—among those who have eyes to see and ears to hear. They may not always deem it advisable to write it down but they give expression to it in conversation. That great task lies before you. It is for you to seek just what you require. That spirit would take you long way towards the achievement of those ideals in the different fields of life which you will seek to establish.

I like to see the students have intellectual honesty, intellectual independence while they preserve decorum and due forms of respect for the professors, not to cultivate among yourselves the desire that you should be respected. Do not imagine when I say this that I am speaking from the point of view of students alone. To my mind it is a mistake to imagine that professors in a university benefit the students and not vice-versa. In a true university it is not only the students who benefit from their being in touch with the students. It is the contact between older minds stored with knowledge and perhaps not so responsive to new ideas, and fresh young minds untampered by excess of knowledge, but full of the desire to learn, it is the contact between the old and young minds that leads to real advancement of knowledge and there is no greater privilege for a professor than to

have as students youngmen who while yielding to none in their respect for him, have none the less the courage of their convictions; who while prepared to learn are also between the professors and the students. Whether such relationship can be established and happily carried out depends to a very large extent on yourselves. You must shake off the spirit of the inferiority complex.

In the world of knowledge we are now seeking to create a new heaven and a new earth. Knowledge is undergoing a continual transformation, it is receiving new impetus everyday. And what we find in the field of Physics and I believe in other sciences is this: Young minds in the Universities by coming to grips with the problems still unsolved under the leadership of the older minds are succeeding in finding a way on to new achievements. In the Universities of Europe you find to-day occupying honoured chairs youngmen 20, 22, or 25 years old. Science teachers up the gospel of youth *Youth alone can break through the traditions—rigid and discarded beliefs, to find a way to new achievements and I ask you my young friends to realise that call to exert yourselves and seek the truth, not the knowledge that lies buried in books but the true knowledge that can only come from intellectual effort* It would be a great mistake to imagine that the mere desire—the mere expression of emotion—will carry you to the desired end. *It is the gospel of work; it is the gospel of strenuous endeavour that I wish to preach to you to-day."*

*"If you really seek to reach the aims of your Association, if you really desire that Bengal should once again reach her destiny, it is for you, by hard labour, by strenuous thought, by devotion to the interests of your Alma Mater and of your country that great destiny can be achieved"*

## TO THE YOUTH

*"We have all been born slaves but let us all resolve to die as freemen. And if we are not to see India free in our own life time, let us at least die in the attempts to free India.*

*The Path of freedom is a thorny path—but is also the path to immortality. To this noble path I invite you—My sisters and brothers of my country."*

*Sri bhas Bose.*

## TO THE STUDENTS

*"As the heirs of a free India, the students, have to train themselves in such a manner as to be the pioneers in the social reconstruction and torch-bearers in the path of freedom. The path to freedom is no doubt a thorny path but it is the path to immortality "leading to glory imperishable." Students of India. Unite—"form a happy band and march shoulder to shoulder along its noble path."*

*Subhas Bose.*

# I

## Mr. SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

\*"There are people in this country, and some of them eminent in public life, who look upon the Youth Movement of to-day with some degree of disfavour or confess that they do not appreciate the purpose and significance of this movement. There are other people who do not realise the inner meanings of the Youth Movement but who nevertheless have joined this movement probably out of a feeling that a movement should not be allowed to grow in which they do not play some part.

"From the dawn of the present renaissance in India up till to-day, several movements and thought-currents, have appeared one after another. That in addition to these movements another movement should come into existence in the shape of the Youth Movement, is in itself a sufficient proof that such a phenomenon was called for. There is certainly some fundamental craving in the soul of the individual and of the nation to satisfy which the Youth Movement had to be carried. What is that fundamental craving? It is the desire for freedom and self-fulfilment.

"The country needs to-day a movement which will vouchsafe to the individual and to the nation

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\* Famous address delivered by him at the First C. P. Youth Conference held at Nagpur on the 29th Nov. 1929.

complete emancipation from bondage of every kind as well as the fullest power of self-fulfilment and self-expression. There are people who should like to convert our Youth Conferences into the back benches of the Indian National Congress, but little do they understand the purpose and significance of the Youth Movement.

"Indian National Congress being primarily a political body, is naturally restricted in the scope. Even with regard to the political problem its objective has not yet been declared to be full independence. It is not therefore a matter for surprise that youngmen and young-women, who see life as one whole and who desire freedom in every shape of life, should feel dissatisfied with a purely political body like the Indian National Congress and would hanker after a movement which endeavours to satisfy all the cravings of the human soul and the needs of our life. It therefore follows that while the Youth Movement is not merely political, it is not non-political. In its scope *it is as large as life*. And since the whole includes all its parts, it is certain that the growth of the Youth Movement will stimulate our political development as well.

"The Youth Movement is an emblem of our dissatisfaction with the present order of things. It stands for the revolt of Youth against age-long bondage, tyranny and oppression. It seeks to create a new and better world for ourselves and for humanity by



removing all shackles and giving the fullest scope to the creative activity of mankind. The Youth Movement is not therefore an additional or an exotic growth superimposed on the movements of to-day. It is a genuine independent movement, the main-springs of which lie deeply embedded in human nature.'

"This movement has come into existence because it fulfils, or strives to fulfil, a crying need of the time and the cravings of the human soul. If one does not realise the inner meanings and purpose of the movement, he can do nothing by merely joining the movement or by "capturing" youth associations. To my mind any association of young men and young women cannot deserve the name of Youth association unless it has all the characteristics of the latter. As I have already hinted, all Youth Movements are characterised by a feeling of restlessness and of dissatisfaction with the existing state of things and they seek to usher in a better order. They stand for freedom from bondage and for revolt against custom and authority, where custom and authority militate against the promptings of the human conscience. Their motto is, self-confidence and self-reliance—as against blind homage and unquestioning obedience to our elders. In these circumstances one cannot be surprised if some of our elders view these movements with dislike or disfavour.

"The purpose of the Youth Movement is to recreate our whole life and to breathe into it the

inspiration of a new ideal. It is this ideal which will give a new meaning and significance to the life that we create. That ideal is full all-round freedom and complete self-fulfilment. Freedom and self-fulfilment are intimately and inseparably connected. Without freedom, self-fulfilment is not possible and freedom has value because it leads to self fulfilment.

"The Youth Movement is in its scope co-extensive with life itself. If therefore follows that the Youth Movement will have as many departments as there are aspects in our life. If we are to rejuvenate the body, we shall need sports, athletics and gymnastics. If we are to emancipate and re-educate the mind, we shall need a new literature, a higher and better type of education and a healthy conception of morality. If we are to rejuvenate society, we shall have to do away ruthlessly with hidebound ideas and customs and substitute new and healthy one instead. Further, we shall have to revalue the existing social and moral values in the light of the ideal of the age and in all probability we shall have to introduce a new scale of values which will govern the society of the future.

"In striking out a new line of thought and action it is but natural that we should run up against existing ideas and vested interests and against the powers that be. But we should not be afraid of that. The progress of the Youth Movement will have to be affected in the teeth of opposition and in the face of numerous obstacles. Occasions will arise when we shall be

hemmed in from all sides and it will appear as if we stand by ourselves cut off from the rest of the world. In such crisis we should remember the pregnant words of that great Irish patriot who in the face of imminent danger cried out triumphantly—

"One man can save Ireland, just as one man redeemed the world." "As an exponent of the Youth Movement, the moment you apply the principle of freedom to every walk of life, you at once create enemies on all sides and all the vested interests affected by your propaganda may combine for the purpose of crushing you. It is easy to fight even a formidable enemy on one front, but it is difficult to fight your enemies on every front simultaneously. The rank and file of the Youth Movement should therefore be prepared to face enemies more formidable than those whom the political workers may have to encounter.

"There is another difficulty which we in the Youth Movement should anticipate and against which we should be forewarned. In a political movement or in a labour movement, you will have to handle large crowds in order to preserve your control over them. You may have to play to the gallery on certain occasions. You may also have to bring yourselves down to the level of the Masses on certain occasions in order to keep up your communion with them. If the Youth Movement on the other hand, you will have to say good-bye to love of popularity—If you happen to possess that failing. On occasions you will

have to take the responsibility of creating public opinion, or of stemming the tide of popular feeling. If you wish to solve the fundamental problems of your national life, you will have to look miles ahead of your contemporaries. The mass mind is often unable to cut itself off from present day mooring and visualize the future. If you propose remedies to anticipate and counteract favour evils, it is not improbable that the mass mind will refuse to accept your prescription. On such an occasion you must summon courage to stand out, alone and unfriended, in the presence of the cross as it were, and fight the rest of the world. One who desires to swim with the tide of the popular approbation on all occasions may become the hero of the hour—but he cannot live in history, neither be prepared for any amount of misunderstanding and for any degree of persecution. For the most unselfish actions we should be prepared to get abuse and villification; from our closest friends we should be prepared for unwarranted hostility.

"But human nature is at bottom divine. The day of misunderstanding, abuse and persecution, however long it may be, will therefore have its end. Even if we have to meet death for the sake of our sincerest convictions, we shall through death attain immortality. Let us therefore be ready for any emergency. The rose is thrice beautiful because of its thorns and so is human life. Would not life be stale and insipid without sacrifice, suffering and persecution ?

"Broadly speaking the Youth Movement has five aspects—viz. political, social, economic, physical and cultural. The aim of the movement is a two fold. One—to break this five fold bondage and as a result of this emancipation to give an impetus to self-fulfillments and self-expressions. The movement is therefore both destructive and creative in character. Without destruction you cannot have a creation. That is why every where in nature we find destruction and creation going on side by side. If you think that destruction is bad and construction good and if we believe that construction is possible without destruction, we shall be sadly mistaken. So also shall we err if we regard destruction to be an end in itself. The growth and expansion of the freedom movement in any sphere of life means destruction and sometimes ruthless destruction. There can be no compromise with untruth, hypocrisy bondage and inequality. We shall have to strike and strike hard if we have to break these shackles and we should not falter or look back when our only duty is to march ahead.

"If there is life within us—if we are not mere 'clods of clay untroubled by a spark,' destruction will unfailingly be accompanied by creative activity.

"Many of the Movements that we witness to-day in India and abroad are reformist in character. The movements touch the fringe of our life without radically transforming it. But we want not reform—but radical transformation. The whole of our life—

both individual and collective—has to be recreated. In order to fulfil this rejuvenation we want a new conception of freedom to inspire us. Freedom has had a varying connotation in different ages and in different climes. In fact in our own country, as elsewhere, there has been an evolution of the conception of freedom. To-day, freedom has at last come to mean complete all round emancipation. At least that is the interpretation which appeals to the youths. We can no longer be content with a half-way house. We want the fullest dose of freedom and we want it in every sphere of life. If we love freedom and love it for its own sake, we cannot possibly tolerate bondage or inequality of any sort. Whether in the political, or in the economic, or in the social sphere—we must be prepared for a full application of the principle of freedom. Every human being—man or women—is born equal and he or she shall have equal opportunities of development—that should be our dictum. This is a principle which it is easy to utter but difficult to act upon—in view of the enormous difficulties we shall have to encounter in giving effect to it.

"Friends, I shall not take up your time unnecessarily by referring to the detailed programme of work which should be adopted by those who desire to help the growth and expansion of the Youth Movement. My task is over when I have dealt with the principles, aims and objects of this movement. *Our ideal is an exceedingly ambitious one—probably the most ambitious*

that one can concede to. We want to transform our whole life and to create a new world and better world for ourselves and for humanity. In order to achieve this, we must rouse all the best that is in us. It is the magic touch of freedom which alone can awaken our dormant faculties and galvanise us into ceaseless activity. How we can rouse this desire for freedom in ourselves firstly and then in our countrymen is our first and foremost problem. We must feel the stings of slavery—the pangs of bondage—if we are to cry out for freedom from the bottom of our heart. When this feeling becomes acute, we shall realise that life without freedom is not worth living and as this experience grows, a time will come when our whole soul will be consumed with the longing for liberty.

"It is at this stage that we can become missionaries for preaching the gospel of freedom. As freedom intoxicated men and women, we should then go from door to door, from village to village, and from city to city to preach the cult of freedom. Every walk of life will feel the breath of life as a result of this propaganda. Destruction and creation will begin. The body politic, the economic order and the social order will be stirred by a new impulse and a new ideal—namely the ideal of freedom and equality. False standards, hide-bound customs and age-long restriction will be pulled down and a new order will gradually come into existence. If we succeed in bringing into existence this new order—based on liberty, equality

"be free. We have all been born slaves but let us all resolve to die as free men. And if we are not to see India free in our own life-time let us at least die in the attempts to free India.....The path to freedom is a thorny path—but is also the path to immortality. To this noble path I invite you—my sisters and brothers of the Central Provinces."

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\*"Friends.

On behalf of the Reception Committee of the 3rd Session of All-India Youth Congress, I accord you a most hearty welcome on your visit to this city of ours. The fact that this year, the 3rd Session of the Congress is going to be held is an unmistakable indication of the growing vitality of the Youth Movement in this country. There is probably some apprehension that this year the proceedings of the All-India Youth Congress may be somewhat overshadowed by the deliberations of the Indian National Congress and of All-Parties convention. But nothing to my mind can detract from the intrinsic importance of a congregation like the Youth Congress. Without minimising in any way the importance of political problem in our life, I would maintain that the problems of Youth are vital problems—they have an importance of their own and we who are the members

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\*Subhas Chander Bose's speech as chairman of the Reception Committee of the 3rd All Youth Congress held at Calcutta on the 25th December 1928 ; under the presidency of Mr. K.F. Natiman.



and fraternity—we shall solve not merely a national problem—but also a world problem.

"India is an epitome of the world. India's problems are world-problems in miniature. The solution of India's problems is therefore a solution of world-problems. India lives to-day inspite of untold suffering and misery and in spite of numerous invasions—because she has a mission to fulfil. India has to save herself because by saving herself—she will save the world. India has to attain freedom because a free India will be able to make a suitable contribution to the culture and civilization of the world. The world is anxious by awaiting India's gift. Without that, the world will be all the poorer.

"Frinds, our responsibility is great, in every age, in every clime Youths have been the torch-bearers of liberty. We have to live up to the example of Youths abroad. What they have achieved elsewhere, certainly the Youths of India can achieve here, if only we rise to the occasion. We are living in momentous times and the fate of India is in the hands of the Youths. I have no doubt that the Youths of this country realise the great responsibility that rests on them. I have no doubt that through their sacrifice, suffering and labour, India will before long be a free country—a country where men and women will born free and will have equal opportunities for education and development. India shall be free—of that there is not the slightest doubt. The only question is, when she will

A feeling of restlessness—of impatience with the present order, must come into existence before any Movement can start. Personally I do not consider this Movement of to-day to be a twentieth century phenomenon or an occidental phenomenon. This is true of every age and every clime. From the time of Socrates and Buddha, men have been inspired by a vision of a better world and under that inspiration have endeavoured to reconstruct society. The Youth Movements of the modern age are characterised by a similar vision and a similar effort. Whether it is Bolshevism in Russia or Fascism in Italy or of the Young Turk-movement in Turkey—whether it is a movement in China or in Persia or in Germany, everywhere you will find the same impulse, the same vision and the same objective. Wherever the older generation of leaders have failed, Youth have become self conscious and have taken upon themselves the responsibility of reconstructing society and of guiding it on towards a better and nobler state of existence.

"Friends, let us now come nearer home. It is not only the Youths of Germany, Russia, Italy and China who are roused. It is not only in medieval Persia and insignificant Afghanistan that the Youths bestirred themselves. Even in this land of lotus eaters the awakening has come. I firmly believe that it is an awakening from within and not merely a ferment on the surface. The Youths of India are no longer content with handing over all responsibility to their older

of the Republic of Youth, attach great value and significance to them. I have no doubt that the deliberations of this Congress will be carried on with a sense of seriousness commensurate with the responsibility which has been cast on our shoulders. I have no doubt that this Congress will give a definite lead to the Youths of this country on some of the most vital problems of our present day life. I therefore, consider it a privilege and an honour that I should be authorised by the Reception Committee to welcome you on such an important occasion.

"If we cast out our eyes beyond our frontiers and take a bird's eye view of the march of world events, there is one outstanding phenomenon which greets us in every land and that is the renaissance of Youth. From North to South and from East to West, wherever we may happen to glance, the Youth Movement has become a reality. It is necessary for us to be clear in our own minds what the characteristics of the Youth Movement are, what are its main springs on the one side and its ultimate objective on the other.

"Any association of young men or of young women does not deserve the designation of youth association. A social service league or a famine relief society is not necessarily a Youth association. A Youth association is characterised by a feeling of dissatisfaction with the present order of things, the desire for a better order accompanied by a vision of that order. Youth Movements are not reformist in our look but revolutionary.

Large scale production is an evil, wants should not be increased and the standard of living should not be raised, that we must endeavour to the best of our ability to go back to the days of the bullock-cart and that the soul is so important that physical culture and military training can well be ignored.

The actual effect of the propaganda carried on by the Pondicherry school of thought is to create a feeling and an impression that there is nothing higher or nobler than peaceful contemplation, that Yoga means Pranayana and Dhyana, that while action may be tolerated as good, this particular brand of yoga is something higher and better. This propaganda has led many a man to forget that spiritual progress under the present day conditions is possible only by ceaseless and unselfish action, that the best way to conquer nature is to fight her and that it is weakness to seek refuge in contemplation when we are hemmed in on all side by dangers and difficulties.

It is the passivism, not philosophic but actual, inculcated by these schools of thought against which I protest. In this holy land of ours, Ashramas are not new institutions and ascetics and Yogis are not novel phenomena. They have held and they will continue to hold an honoured place in society. But it is not their lead that we shall have to follow if we are to create a new India at once free, happy and great.

Friends, you will pardon me if in a fit of out spokenness I have trod on your sentiments. As I

leaders and sitting down with folded hands or following like dumb driven cattle. They have realised that it is for them to create a new India, free, great and powerful. They have accepted the responsibility ; they have prepared themselves for the consequences and they are now busy schooling themselves for the great task that awaits them. At this critical juncture, it is the duty of well-wishers of India to speak out fearlessly what they think of the movement or movements going on to-day. With an intuitive insight the present day movement is to be analysed critically, what defects there are have to be ruthlessly exposed and the entire movement is to be guided along healthy and fruitful channels.

"As I look around me to day, I am struck by two movements or two schools of thought about which, however small and insignificant I may be, it is my duty to speak out openly and fearlessly. I am referring to the two schools of thought, which have their centres at Sabarmati and Pondicherry. I am not considering the fundamental philosophy underlying those two schools of thought. This is not the time for metaphysical speculation. I shall talk to you to day as pragmatist, as one who will judge the intrinsic value of a school of thought of from a metaphysical point of view, but from experience of its actual effects and consequences.

"The actual effect of the propaganda carried on by the Sabarmati school of thought is to create a feeling and an impression that modernism is bad,

whole on the right track, things will their proper shape in due time.

Friends, one word more and I have done. The present year is a landmark not only in the history our political movement but also in the history of the Indian Youth Movement. I hope and pray that this session will give a hold and definite lead to the Youth of this country. We are fortunate to-day in welcoming as our President, one, who needs no introduction to the youth of this country, I mean Mr. Nariman of Bombay. Mr. Nariman may be more intimately known, loved and respected by youths in Western India but it is also a fact that he is known, loved and respected by Youths in other parts of the country as well. We have during the last few years followed his career and activity with the closest interest and I believe that it is a privilege for us to be able to welcome him into our midst. Under his able guidance and leadership. We shall have a most successful session and thereafter a useful and prosperous year.

I once again accord you all a most hearty welcome.

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\* "What we want is an awakening from within, which will bring about a radical transformation of our life. Tinkering reform will not do—superficial remedies will be of no avail. What is wanted is a transfiguration of our whole life—a

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\*Mr. Bose's presidential speech at Amraoti Students Conference held on 1st December 1929.

have just said I do not for one moment consider the fundamental philosophy underlying the two schools of thought but the actual consequences from a pragmatic point of view. In India we want to-day a philosophy of activism. We must be inspired by robust optimism. We have to live in the present and to adapt ourselves to modern conditions. We can no longer live in an isolated corner of the world. When India is free, she will have to fight her modern enemies with modern methods, both in the economic and in the political spheres. The days of the bullock-cart are gone and are gone for ever. Free India must prepare herself for any eventuality as long as the whole world does not accept whole-heartedly the policy of disarmament.

I am not one of those who in their zeal for modernism forget the glories of the past. We must take our stand on our past. India has a culture of her own which she must continue to develop along her own distinctive channels. In philosophy, literature, art, science, we have something new to give to the world which the world eagerly awaits. In a word, we must arrive at a synthesis. Some of our best thinkers and workers are already engaged in this important task. We must resist the cry of "Back to the Vedas" on the one side, and on the other side the meaningless craze for fashion and change of modern Europe. It is difficult to restrict a living movement within proper bounds, but I believe that if the pioneers and the leaders of the movement are on the

whole on the right track, things will their proper shape in due time.

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complete revolution, if you will. Do not feel shy of the word 'revolution.' We may differ in our conception of 'revolution' but I have yet to see a living human being who does not believe in revolution. There is no inherent difference between "evolution" and "revolution". Revolution is evolution compressed into a shorter period; evolution is revolution spread out over a longer period. Both evolution and revolution imply change and progress and in nature there is room for both. In fact, nature cannot do without either.

I have said that we shall have to alter many of our notions of good and bad. I have also said that we want a radical transformation of our whole life. This is necessary if we are to become great as a nation and occupy a seat of honour among the foremost nations of the world. Life has meanings worth and significance only if it is lived for the sake of an ideal. A nation need not live—in fact it has no right to live—if it does not want to progress and should achieve greatness merely to fulfil a selfish national purpose; it should aspire to become great in order to make humanity great—so that the world may become ultimately a better and happier place to dwell in.

India possesses all the resources, intellectual, moral and material, which go to make a people great. And India is still living, in spite of her hoary antiquity, because she has to become great once

again—because she has a mission to perform. India's mission is firstly to save herself and thereafter to make her contribution to the sum-total of the culture and civilization of the world. In spite of half—a hundred handicaps, India's contribution to-day is by no means a small one. Just imagine for a moment what her contribution would be, if she were free to develop her life according to her own genius.

I am sure that our people can achieve wonders if only we could be roused to ceaseless activity. I am also sure that once we are thoroughly roused, we shall be able to outrun even the progressive of the nations of to-day "the hustlers from the west". All that we want is a magic wand by waving which our whole life could be galvanised. The French Philosopher, Bergson, has talked of the "elan vital"—the vital impetus—which moves the whole world to activity and progress. What is the "elan vital" of our national life? It is the desire for freedom, for expansion, for self-expression. The counterpart of this desire is revolt against bondage. If you want to be free, you must revolt against the bondage that surround you—and if you revolt against bondage and revolt successfully, you are bound to win your freedom.

Except those whose moral sense is altogether dead, every human being is bound to feel, more or less, the pangs of slavery and the humiliation of servitude. When this feeling becomes acute, slavery and bondage become intolerable and one develops a

strong desire to throw off the yoke of servitude. This desire is further heightened by a taste of the joy of freedom, either through personal experience of free countries or through study and imagination of the happy conditions that result from freedom. The psychological aspect of "tapasya" in the cause of our country's salvation consists in making our mind more and more sensitive to national humiliation and racial discrimination and in intensifying our desire for freedom. This can be effected by the study of history, observation of our, present-day degradation, contemplation of the ideal of life and above all, by comparing conditions prevailing under the regime of servitude with those prevailing under the reign of freedom.

Baptism, initiation, "deeksha" etc. have to me but one meaning—viz., consecration of our life at the altar of freedom. Complete self-consecration will not be possible in a day. But as we become more and more imbued with the desire for freedom we shall get a taste of joy unspeakable and we shall realise more and more that life has a meaning and a purpose. A revolution will set in—our thoughts, feelings and aspirations will undergo a transformation. Only one thing in life will have value for us—viz. Freedom ; and our inner life will be so metamorphosed or recreated as to conform to that ideal. The experience of this gradual transformation is almost indescribable. When this transformation is complete,

we shall be reborn; we shall be "dwijs" in the real sense of the term. There after we shall think, feel and even dream only of freedom and all our activity will be permeated with but one desire—the desire to attain freedom. In a word we shall become free—in toxicated human beings who live, move and have their being only freedom.

Once the desire for freedom is enkindled in our hearts, it will need an adequate instrument in order to fulfil itself. For this purpose all our faculties; Physical, intellectual and moral—will have to be requisitioned. We shall have to unlearn much of what we have learnt and learn for the first time what we never were taught. The body and the mind will have to undergo a new course of training and discipline in order to be fit for the task of achieving freedom. The external aspect of our life will also change. Luxury, ease and comfort will have to be abandoned, new modes of life will have to be adopted and old habits shunned. Thus will our life become a purified instrument for the purpose of attaining freedom.

Man is after all a social being. His self-fulfilment is not possible if he is cut off from the rest of society. The individual depends much for his growth and development on society, as society does on the individual. Further, the progress of the individual does not possess much value if it does not carry with it the progress of society as a whole. All ideal which,

is accepted by an individual recluse, but is rejected by society and is not therefore embodied in our corporate life—has not much worth. If freedom is to be the cardinal principle of our life—the “elan vital” of all our activity—it should also be made the basis of social reconstruction. It will be seen at once that if the principle of freedom is to be applied to society and made the fundamental basis of the society of the future—It will mean nothing short of social revolution. Freedom for the whole of society will mean freedom for women as well as for men—freedom for the depressed classes and not merely for the higher castes—freedom for the poor and not merely for the rich—freedom for the old; in other words, freedom for all sections, for all minorities and for all individuals. Thus freedom implies equality and equality cannot exist without fraternity. To free society, therefore, women will have to be given an equal status with men, in law as well as in social matters; the social barriers which put the brand of inferiority on certain sections or castes owing to their birth, will have to be ruthlessly demolished; the inequalities of wealth which stand in the way of the social advancement will have to be removed and equal opportunities for education and development will have to be given the responsibility of reconstructing society and of carrying on the administration. In society, in the body politic and in the economic world, each individual should be as free as any other and should

enjoy the same status. Equal opportunities for all, equitable distribution of wealth, abolition of all social barriers, including caste and emancipation from foreign rule these should be some of the basic principles of the new society we want to build.

Concluding his speech S. Bose said that the vision of a FREE INDIA which he has dreamt is "a perfect synthesis of all that is good in the East and in the West " As the heirs of a free India, the students, have to train themselves in such a manner as to be the pioneers in the social reconstruction and torch-bearers in the path to Freedom. The path to freedom is no doubt a thorny path but it is the path to immortality " leading to glory imperishable " students of India unite, " form a happy band and march shoulder to shoulder along its noble Path."

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"Friends, I shall make no apology if in this discourse I refer at length to political questions and endeavour to answer them. I know that there are people in this country—even eminent personages—who think that "a subject race has no politics"—and that student in particular should have nothing to do with politics. But my own view is that a subject race has nothing but politics. In a dependent country every problem that you can think of, when analysed:

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\*Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose's presidential address on the Students Conference held in Lahore on 19th, October, 1929.

properly, will be found to be at bottom a political problem. Life is one whole—as the late Dāshbandhu C. R. Das used to say—and you cannot therefore separate politics from economics or either from education. Human life cannot be split up into compartments. All the aspects or phases of national life are interrelated and all the problems are, as it were, interwoven. This being the case it will be found that in a subject race all the evils and all the short-comings can be traced to a political cause—viz, political servitude. Consequently students cannot afford to bind themselves to this all-important problem—the problem of how to achieve our political emancipation.

I do not understand why a special ban should be imposed on participation in politics if no such ban merely on political work is meaningless. If in a dependent country, all the problems are fundamentally political problems—then all national activity is in reality political in character. There is no ban on participation in politics in any free country—on the contrary, students are encouraged to take part in politics. This encouragement is deliberately given because out the ranks of the students arise political thinkers and politicians. If in India students do not take active part in politics from where are we to recruit our political workers and where are we to train them? Further, it has to be admitted that participation in politics is necessary for the development of character and manhood. Thought, without

action, cannot suffice to build character and for this reason participation in healthy activity—political, social, artistic, etc.,—is essentially necessary for developing character. Book worms, gold-medalists and office clerks are not what universities should endeavour to produce—but men of character who will become great by achieving greatness for their country in different shapes of life.

The student's movement of to-day is not a movement of irresponsible boys and girls. It is a movement of responsible, thorough-going men and women who are inspired with one ideal—viz., to develop their character and personality and thereby render the most effective and useful service to the cause of their country. This movement has, or should have, two lines of activity. In the first place, it should deal with the problems which relate exclusively to the student population of the day and endeavour to bring about their physical, intellectual and moral regeneration. In the second place, looking upon the student as the future citizen, it should endeavour to equip him for the battle of life and for this purpose, it should give him a foretaste of what problems and activities are likely to confront him when he enters the arena of life.

There is one suggestion I have to offer to which I should like to draw your attention. I wish our students' Associations could start co-operative *Swadeshi Stores within their respective jurisdiction* for the exclusive benefit of the student population. If



make up their mind to be absolutely fearless and self-reliant in the matters of preparing themselves, through thought and action, for their post-university career.

If we are to bring about a revolution of ideas we have first to hold up before us an ideal which will galvanise our whole life. That ideal is Freedom. But freedom is a word which has a varied connotation and even in our country the conception of freedom has undergone a process of evolution. By freedom I mean all-round freedom i.e., freedom for the individual as well as for the poor; freedom for all individuals and for all classes. This freedom implies not only emancipation from political bondage but also equal distribution of wealth, abolition of caste barriers and social inequities and destruction of communalism and religious intolerance. This as an ideal, may appear utopian to hard-headed men and women—but this ideal alone can appease the hunger of the soul.

Freedom has as many facets as there are aspects in our national life. There are individuals who when talk of freedom think only of some particular aspect of freedom. It has taken us several decades to outgrow this narrow conception of freedom and to arrive at a full and all round conception of it. If we really love freedom and love it, not for some selfish end, but for its own sake the time has come for us to recognise that true freedom means freedom from bondage of every kind and freedom not only for the individual but also for the whole of society. This, to my

these stores are run efficiently by the students themselves, they will serve a dual purpose. On the one hand, Swadeshi goods will be made available to the students at a cheap price and thereby home industry would be encouraged. On the other hand, students could acquire experience in running co-operative stores and could utilise the profit for advancing the welfare for the student community. For advancing the cause of students'—welfare other items on your programme would be—physical, culture, societies, gymnasiums, study-circles, debating societies, magazines, music-clubs, libraries and reading-rooms, social service-leagues, etc.

The other, and probably more important aspect, of the students' movement is the training of the future citizen. This training will be both intellectual and practical. We shall have to hold out before the students a vision of the ideal society which he should try to realise in his own lifetime and at the same time chalk out for him a programme of action which he should try to follow to the best of his ability—so that when performing his duties as a student he may, at the same time, be preparing himself for his post-university career. It is in this sphere of activity that there is a likelihood of conflict with the authorities. But whether the conflict will actually arise or not, depends largely on the attitude of the educational authorities. If the conflict does unfortunately arise, there is no help for it and students should once for all

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mind, is the ideal of the age, and the vision that has captivated my soul is the vision of a completely free and emancipated India.

The only method of achieving freedom is for us to think and feel as free men. Let there be a complete revolution within and let us be thoroughly intoxicated with the wine of freedom. It is only freedom-intoxicated men and women who will be able to free humanity. When the "will to be free" is roused within us, we shall then proceed to plunge headlong into the ocean of activity. The voice of caution will no longer deter us and the lure of truth and glory will lead us on to our cherished goal.

India is bound to be free—of that there is not the slightest doubt. It is to me as sure as day follows night. There is no power on earth which can keep India in bondage any longer. But let us dream of an India for which it would be worth while to give all that we have—even life itself—and for which we could sacrifice our dearest and nearest. I have given you my own conception of freedom and I have tried to portray before you the India as I want her to be. Let a completely emancipated India preach to the world her new gospel of freedom.

Even at the risk of being called a chauvinist, I would say to my country-men that India has a mission to fulfil and it is because of this that India still lives. There is nothing mystic in this world "mission," India has something original to contribute to the culture and

civilization of the world in almost every department of human life. In the midst of her present degradation and slavery, the contribution she has been making is by no means a small one. Just imagine for a moment how great her contribution will be once she is free to develop along her own lines and in accordance with her own requirements.

There are people in this country—and some of them eminent and respectable personages—who will not agree to an all-round application of the principle of freedom. We are sorry if we cannot please them, but in no circumstances can we give up an ideal which is based on truth, justice and equality. We shall go our own way, whether you join us or not—but you can rest assured that even if a few desert us, thousands and even million will ultimately join our army of freedom. Let us have no compromise with bondage, injustice or inequality.

Friends, many of you must be now training yourselves for joining the ranks of the Indian National Congress. The Indian National Congress is undoubtedly the supreme national organisation in this country and in it all our hopes are centred. But the Indian National Congress itself depend, or should depend, for its strength, influence and power on such movements as the Labour movement, Peasant movement, Student's movement, etc. If we succeed in emancipating our labour, peasantry, depressed classes, youths, students and women-folk we shall be able to rouse such a force in the country as will make the Indian

National Congress a poignant instrument for achieving our political salvation.

(5)

"Standing on this sacred spot one is naturally reminded of the dreamy past of the land of Varendra, Gaur and of the achievements of Pal Kings, of the wonderful prowess of its rulers and of the magnificent development of the Bengalees in Art, Literature and all other phases of life one thousand years ago. This thread of wornout history may seem to be a happy nightmare now but it is an achievement to which every Bangalee will look back with pride and glory.

"In spite of numerous divisions and sub-divisions; our Bengal is a united whole with all the wealth of nature lavishly showered on her. In the midst of all its diversities runs an absolute truth which has manifested itself in all phases of Bengal's history whether in literature, philosophy, religion and in the fight for freedom. Bengal's earth and water are but the outward manifestation of that truth. Bengal's civilisation has not burst into full glory in one day, and to achieve its full realisation it has got to take stock of the past.

"Bengal has a message for her own to deliver to the world. The message is the sum total of life and history of Bengal as a whole, and as she tried in the past to make that message heard, was doing it even

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\*Mr. Bose's presidential speech at Rangpur Political Conference held on 30th March 1929.

now. She would continue to do so in future. That message was ingrained in the character of Bengal. The heart of Bengal is always for Diversity, Harmony and Fraternity. Bengal is always for novelty. Bengal's innate nature is always dynamic and not static. He might as well be called a "revolutionary." From the Vedic age down to the present moment, history abounds with instances to show that she is always moving and assimilating.

"Truth alone is our ideal and that explains why in spite of many inroads on Bengal in culture, civilisation, literature, religion, she had, always assimilated the truth of the new comers, keeping her individuality intact all the while. Through stress and efforts of thousand years, Bengal had all along maintained her individuality through weal and woe, joys and sorrows, responding at the same time to new ideas which come upon her. As a result of this thought "Revolution," Vaishnavism and Brahmanism flourished in Bengal. Efforts in this direction are still going on, but to achieve success we must abolish all caste system, or convert all castes into Sudras or Brahmins. It should now be tried by Vaishnavs and Brahmins, but is not successful. It should now be decided which of the latter means is to be adopted.

"As in religion so in literature Bengal had manifested herself in diverse ways. Her Vidyapati and Chandidas, Mukundaram and Bharat Chandra, Kasiram, Kirtyibas and Ram Parsad stand as monumental

examples of her new discoveries in the domain of thought and culture. Bengal does not forget the contribution made to her literature by the Mussalmans and it was here that her indissoluble entity between the two communities has been formed which had weathered many storms in the past. In a word Bengal as she is to-day, is the child of universalism irrespective of any caste and creed.

"But a reaction set in for a time which received a rude shock as she came in contact with western civilisation. True to our characteristics, Bengal woke up to make her contribution in the wake of the new movement inaugurated by Raja Ram Mohan Roy. *The birth of the Brahmô cult saved Bengal from the attack made on her by the Christian Missionaries.* The unfinished work of the Raja found an impetus when Ram Krishna Paramhansa and Swami Vivekananda came into the field towards the end of the 19th century. This renaissance of religion reflected on her literature, philosophy and in all spheres of life and Hindus and Mussalmans together united to preach this gospel of brotherhood. It was Swami Vivekananda who gave a new turn in the history of Bengal as he had repeatedly said that man making was his mission in life.

"In the work man-making, Swami Vivekananda did not confine his attention to any particular sect but embraced the society as a whole. His fiery words—*'Leta new India emerge through the plough*



of the cultivators through the baskets of the fishermen, cobblers, and sweepers, through the workshop and from the huts and bazars—are still ringing in every Bangalee home. This Socialism did not derive its birth from the books of Karl Mark: It has its origin in the thought and culture of India. The gospel of democracy that was preached by Swami Vivekananda has manifested itself fully in the writings and achievements of Deshabandu Das who said that Narayan lives amongst those who tills the land and prepares our bread by the sweat of their brow, those who in the midst of grinding poverty have kept the torch of our civilisation, culture and religion burning.

"The first step towards the nation-building is the creation of truemen and the second step is organisation. Vivekananda and others tried to make men while Deshabandhu tried to create political organisation and he created such an organisation that extorted the admiration even of the Britishers

"Now-a-days, new thoughts of Socialism are travelling to India from the west and it is revolutionising the thoughts of many, but the ideas of socialism are not a novelty in this country. We regard them as such because we have lost the thread of our own history. It is not proper to take any school of thoughts as unmistakable and absolute truth. We must not forget that the Russians, the main disciples of Karl Marx have not blindly followed his ideas and finding it difficult to apply his theories they have

adopted a new economic policy consistent with possession of private property and ownership of business factories. It would be therefore folly to rely for enlightenment of thoughts on Russia. We shall build our own society and politics according to our own ideals and according to our needs. This should be the object and aim of every Indian.

"We have now arrived at the third stage of the political struggle that was begun in the 20th century. The first stage was the Swadeshi era, the second was the period of revolutionaries and the third is the stage of non-co-operation and socialism. Many might think that our efforts in the fight for Swaraj have gone in vain, but no useful attempt has ever failed. As a result of the last 25 years' agitation we have regained our self-respect and self-confidence. The country is gradually being organised, and there is no power on earth that can deprive us of our birth right. The problem is how soon we shall achieve that.

"How shall we be able to free our country without recourse to armed revolution? Such a question is on many lips. My reply is that it is only our co-operation, that enable a handful of Englishman to rule our country. When our mass movement will be more powerful and country wide, the desire for co-operation die a natural death and our policy of non-co-operation will be really successful. The only weapon that we can use to achieve this is

regard themselves as the arbiters of the black races. This explains the new awakening in Asia. This is a fight for self-realisation. India cannot remain aloof from this current.

"The British Parliament has sent serene Britishers totally ignorant of Indian conditions to determine the future constitution of India. The commission have toured round the country under ample police guards and made enquiries according to their own lights. The people of the country have thought it beneath their dignity to co-operate with such a commission and by this non-co-operation with the commission the Indians have incurred the displeasure of the Britishers. Under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi the people of this country have started the campaign of boycott of foreign goods. The incident has manifested the grim determination of the people and has also shown how insurmountable difficulties will be placed in our way. We have got to overcome those difficulties.

"During the last few days a new cloud has made its appearance on the political horizon of India. Arrests have begun in this country as a result of terror of communist agitation in Russia. Similar incidents have occurred so many times during the last 20 years and there is nothing new in it. The simple fact that if the people of the country are contended and if the administration of the country is entrusted to their hands, all difficulties and dis-

contents will vanish, is beyond the pale of intelligence of the power, proud bureaucracy. It is because of this that they are launching repression to kill discontentment but this attempt is only increasing discontent. No body should think that this is the end of the repressive era. We should be prepared for such calamities every moment. For, untill we achieve Swaraj, waves of such repression will one after another rage upon the country.

" We have now got to consider our duty with regard to these arrests. It teaches us three lessons :

" (1) Until the Labour movement is able to gather strength, possibilities of repression will remain. It is therefore necessary to establish unity between the different labour organisations.

" (2) The Labour Commission ought to be boycotted. I cannot understand why the All-India Trade Union Congress has not yet declared a boycott of the Whitley Commission. Boycott of Simon Commission on the one hand and co operation with the Whitley Commission on the other will be inconsistent. Not to speak of higher considerations, the Whitley Commission should be boycotted as a protest against the arrests of the labour leaders. Many among the arrested leaders are for the boycott of the Commission. Therefore the best way to show sympathy with them will be to boycott the Whitley commission.

" (3) There ought to be closer co-operation between the Labour movement and the Congress. Attempts

should be made to avoid bitterness and introduce mutual help. The history of China and Ireland shows that freedom movement in those countries could not have achieved success without the co-operation of Labour parties; Unless the huge power of Indian Labour is organised we won't be able to gain political or economic freedom."

Concluding the president passionately appealed to the people of Bengal to strengthen the Congress organisation and make preparations for the coming struggle.

(6)

"I have always had a close touch with the students movement in India and for various reasons. My experiences as a student convinced me years ago that students must have an organisation of their own, if they want to exist as self respecting individuals and prepare themselves for their future career as citizens of a great country. When I ceased to be a student in the narrow sense of the term, I resolved within myself that I would do very best to lend a helping hand to the future generation of students, if and when the necessity arose.

Students all over the world, regardless of their national barriers, look upon themselves as a fraternity and rightly too. It is not a mere truism that the students of to-day are the leaders of to-morrow and that they are the living embodiment of a nation's hopes

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\*Mr. Bose's message to the U. P. Students Conference held in Allahabad on 29th October 1933.

and aspirations. The students represent, as a rule, the most idealistic part of a nation, and it is because of their innate idealism that the students of the world feel that they are members of one great fraternity. It should be our duty to foster this sense of solidarity among our students, so that through them, the Indian people may be welded into one nation for all time to come.

The students of a free country enjoy the rights which free men and free women usually enjoy but this is not the case with our students. Our students suffer from the handicaps which members of a subject race cannot avoid. They are looked upon as minors by their guardian at home and outside, by the state, they are usually regarded as political suspects (Things have improved since the Congress Governments came into existence). In such circumstances, students must learn to help themselves. They must insist on being treated as grown-up men and women and demand those rights which members of a free nation are entitled to.

Not infrequently students come into conflict with the authorities, both educational and governmental. Conflicts with the Federal authorities usually arise when they are denied their rights as students and with the governmental authorities when they are denied their rights as citizens. In either case, students can hope to vindicate themselves only when they are properly organised. Organisation, therefore, is their

first and foremost task. Students' Conferences can be of lasting benefit only when they afford impetus. Organisation for vindicating students' rights is not however, enough. Organisation should also aim at providing physical, intellectual and moral training so that students may, individually and collectively, turn out to be better men and better citizens.

I am most decidedly of opinion that the platform of the students' movement should be a broad-based one and should be open to students of all shades of opinion. It would be a disaster if students belonging to a particular party or group or ideology were to attempt to capture office to the exclusion of other students. If this happens, the students' movement will split and several students' federations will come into existence. In your deliberations, hold aloft before your eyes the ideals of liberty, equality, fraternity and progress and remember always that liberty means emancipation from bondage of every kind—political, social and economic.

" Are you, youngmen and women of India, going to dare to think and dare to act? Are you prepared to stand shoulder to sholder with the youth of the world, not only to free your contrv from an insolent and alien rule but also to establish in this unhappy world of ours a better and happier society. That is the problem before you and if you wish to face it squarely and fearlessly you will have to make up you minds to rid yourself and your country of every obstacle in your path; whether it is placcd by our alien rulers or has the prestige of ancient customs. You must have your ideals clear cut before you—how else you hope to build the great structure of your dreams? Can you build a palace on the foundations of mud hut or a fine bridge with straw? With definite ideals of your goal you will gain clearness of purpose and effectiveness of action and each step that you take will carry you nearer to your hearts' desire "

" I may be a weak instrument capable of doing little by myself inspite of my ardent desire to do much. And you individually may be able to do little. But you and I together can do much and working with the awakened youth of this country. We can and will achieve something. For youths only can save this country and the world. I do not admire the Fascists but I do advise them for having as their war cry a hymn to youth "Govinezza" and I wish you would also adopt their motto: "LIVE DANGEROUSLY" let our elders seek security and stability. Our quest must be adventure, but adventure is a noble enterprise which promises to bring peace to a distracted world as security and stability to the millions who have it not."

Jawaharlal Nehru.



## II

### PANDIT JAWAHAR LAL NEHRU.

\*Friends !

" You have done me the honour in inviting me to preside over this gathering of the youth of Bengal and I am grateful for it. But I have wondered what you wish me to say or do, what kind of message to deliver. I have no special message and you know well that I am no weaver of fine phrases or dealer in eloquence. The Bengal, justly known for her warmhearted eloquence and love of art and beauty and passionate emotioalism, you have invited a dweller from the colder and some time much hotter regions of the north, whose ancestors came not so very long ago from the barren and snow covered mountains that over look the vast Indian plain, and I am afraid I carry with me some thing of the coldness and hardness of that mountain climate. A very great leader of Bengal and of our country, whose memory we revere to day, once called me very justly " cold-blooded ". I plead guilty to the charge, and since you have taken the risk of inviting me you will have to bear with my cold-bloodedness.

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\*Address delivered by Pandit Nehru in the Students Conference held in the Shardhanand Park Calcutta on 22nd September 1920.

I have begun by drawing your attention to certain minor differences between us—a Kashmiri settled in the heart of Hindūstān, which is now called the United Provinces, and the residents of Bengal and yet you all know how unimportant are these differences, and how strong are the common bonds that tie us—the bonds of a common legacy from the past, of common suffering and the hope of building up a great future for this country of yours and mine. And indeed you can carry this comparison a little further, across the artificial frontiers that separate country from country. We are told of vital differences of race and character. Such differences there undoubtedly are, but how many of them are purely accidental due to climate and environment and education and how liable to change they are? You will find that the common bond is greater and more vital than the differences, though many of us may not realise the fact. It is the realisation of this common bond of humanity that has given rise to the great Youth Movement of to-day. Many of you may be too young to remember the despair and the feeling of revolt in the minds of youth during and specially after the Great War. Old men sat in their comfortable cabinets and banking houses and hid their selfishness and greed and lies under a cover of fine phrase and appeals for freedom and democracy, and the young, believing in these fine phrases, went out by the million to face death and few returned. Seventy millions of them, were mobilised and of the

fifteen millions that actually served at the front; over eight millions died and over five and a half million were maimed for life. Think of these terrible figures and remember that they were all youngmen with their lives stretching out in front of them and their hopes unfulfilled. And what did this awful sacrifice bring forth? A piece of violence and an aggravation of all the ills that the world was suffering from. You remember well that the first fruits of the peace in India were the Rowlatt Acts and Martial Law. You know also how the fine principle of self-determination which the allies shouted from the house tops, has been applied to India and to other countries. A new cloak for the greed of the imperialist powers was created in the shape of mandates and in awarding mandates the "principal consideration" was to be the preference of the inhabitants. This preference was shown unaccountably by rebellion against the British in Mesopotamia and rebellion against the French in Syria. But the aeroplanes and bombs were the British answer in Iraq and the ancient and beautiful city of Damascus was reduced to ruins by the French. In Europe itself the peace created for more problems than it solved.

Is it any wonder that the youths of the world rebelled and cast out their old time leaders on whom even the terrible lesson of the war was lost, and who still went on intriguing in the old way, and prepared for yet another and a greater War? Youth set about

organising itself and set out to find the ways and means of establishing an order of society which would put an end to the misery and conflicts of to-day.

That is the basis of the world Youth Movement to-day. It is a larger and wiser basis than that of national freedom, for it became obvious to them that the narrow nationalism of the West lays the seeds of war and national freedom often results in the freedom of a handful of people only and the rest continue to suffer and be exploited. And so the youth of the world probed deeper into the cause of present day misery, they studied the economic and social conditions of the people and they saw that although science and the changes that science had brought had in a few generations covered the track of centuries, the minds of men still lagged behind and thought in terms of the dead past. Science had made the world international and inter-dependent but national rivalries continued and resulted in war. Science had vastly increased production and there was enough for all and to spare but poverty continued and the contrasts between luxury and misery were marked than ever before. But if mankind is foolish and errs, facts do not adapt themselves to its errors. And the woe of our imagination conflicts with the world of reality and is it any wonder that chaos and misery result? Facts are not to blame for this. The troubles and the difficulties lie not in things but in our misconception of them and misinterpretation of them. Our

elders fail frequently because they are rigid in their minds and unable to change their mental outlook or adapt themselves to changing facts. But youth is not hidebound or rigid. Youth can think and is not afraid of the consequences of thought. Do not imagine that thought is an easy matter or that its consequences are trivial. Thought is not or should not be afraid of the wrath of the heavens or the terrors of the hell. It is the most revolutionary thing on earth. And it is because youth dare think and dare act that it holds out the promise of taking out this country and this world of ours from the ruls and mire in which they have sunk.

Are you, young men and women of Bengal, going to dare? Are you prepared to stand shoulder to shoulder with the youth of the world, not only to free your country from an insolent and alien rule but also to establish in this unhappy world of ours a better and happier society. That is the problem before you and if you wish to face it squarely and fearlessly you will have to make up your minds to ride yourself and your country of every obstacle in your path, whether it is placed by our alien rulers or has the prestige of ancient custom. You must have your ideal clear cut before you—how else you hope to build the great structure of your dreams? Can you build a palace on the foundations of mud hut or a fine bridge with straw? With definite ideals of your goal you will gain clearness of purpose and effectiveness of

action and each step that you take will carry you nearer to your heart's desire. What shall this idea be; National independence and perfect freedom to develop on the line of our own choosing is the essential requisite of all progress. Without it there can be no political or economic or social freedom. But national independence should not mean for us merely an addition to the warring groups of nations. It should be a step towards the creation of a world commonwealth of nations in which we can assist in the fullest measure to bring about world co-operation and world harmony.

But there can be no world co-operation so long as one country dominates over and exploits another and one group or class exploits another. Therefore we shall have to put an end to all exploitation of man by man or woman by man. You cannot have a purely political ideal for politics is after all only a small part of life although, situated as we are under alien rule, it dominates every branch of our activity. Your ideal must be a complete whole and must comprise life as it is to-day,—economic, social as well as political. It can only be one of social equality in its widest sense and equality of opportunity for every one. It is notorious that we have neither these to-day. Our women folk, in spite of the great examples of old that we are so fond of repeating, are shackled and unfree. Large classes of our countrymen have been deliberately suppressed by us in the past and denied all opportuni-

the condition of the poor workers in these mills and yet the jute workers, miserable as they are, have gone there because there was no room for them on the land or their condition on the land were even worse. Can you expect any place in the land where there is so much misery and so much contrast between wealth and abject poverty? You cannot ignore these problems or leave them to a future age for solution and if you are afraid of tackling them you find that facts can only be ignored at your peril. We are sometimes told that we must do justice between landlord and tenant and capitalist and worker, and justice means the maintenance of the *status quo*. It is the kind of justice the League of Nations gives when it maintains the present *status quo* with the imperialist powers dominating and exploiting half the earth. When the *status quo* itself is rank injustice those who desire to maintain it must be considered as upholders of that injustice.

If your ideal is to be one of social equality and world federation then perforce you must work for a socialist state. The word socialist frightens many people in this country, but that matters little for fear is their constant companion. Ignorant of everything important that has happened in this world of thought since they left their school-books they fear what they do not and will not understand. It is for you, the youth of the country, to appreciate the new forces and ideal that are convulsing the world and to apply them to

pack of cards before this airy nothing? Surely you could not have better evidence of the weakness of this giant Empire which sprawls over the fairest portions of the earth surface. It is a giant with feet of clay. But if an idea is a dangerous thing it is also a very elusive thing. It crosses frontiers and customs barriers without paying any duty and bayonets and men of war cannot stop it. The Government of India must be strangely lacking in intelligence if they imagine they can stop any ideas from entering India by legislation.

What is this communist idea before which the British Empire quakes? I do not propose to discuss it there but I wish to tell you that though personally I do not agree with many of the methods of the communists and I am by no means sure to what extent communism can suit the present conditions in India, I do believe in communism as an ideal of society. For essentially it is socialism, and socialism I think is the only way if the world is to escape disaster.

And Russia: what of her? An outcaste like us from the nations and much slandered and often erring. But in spite of her many mistakes she stands to-day as a great opponent of imperialism and her record with the nations of the East has been just and generous. In China and Turkey and Persia of her own free will she gave up her valuable rights and concessions, whilst the British bombarded the crowded Chinese cities, and killed Chinamen by



hundreds because they dared to protest against British Imperialism.

In the city of Tabriz in Persia when the Russian ambassador first came, he called the populace together and on behalf of the Russian nation tendered formal apology for the sins of the Tsars. Russia goes to the East as an equal, not as a conqueror or a race proud superior. It is any wonder that she is welcomed?

Some of you may go in after years to foreign countries for your studies. If you go to England, you will notice in full measure what race prejudice is. If you go to the continent of Europe, you will be more welcome whether you go to France or Germany or Italy. If any of you go to Russia, you will see how racial feeling is utterly absent and how the Chinamen through the Universities of Moscow are treated just like others.

I have placed before you the ideas of internationalism and socialism as the only ideals worthy of the fine temper of youth. Internationalism can of course only come to us through national independence. It cannot come through the British Empire or the British Commonwealth of Nations, call it what you will, for the empire is to-day the greatest foe of internationalism. If in future England chooses to enter real world Federation, none will welcome her more than we, but she will have to shed her imperialism before she can enter. Our quarrel is not with the

people of England but with the imperialism of England. I have laid stress on internationalism although it may be a distant ideal for us. But the world is already largely international although one may not realise it. And situated as we are the reaction against foreign rule is apt to make us narrowly national. We talk of the greatness of India and of her special mission to the world and we love to dwell on her past. It is well that we remember our past for it was great and worth remembering. But it is for aye to look back, youth's eyes should be turned to the future. And I have often wondered if there is any country in the world, and people who do not fancy that they have a special mission for the world. England has her 'White man's burden' which she insists on carrying in spite of ungrateful people who object and rebel; France has her 'mission civilisatrice'; America is "God's own Country"; Germany has her "Kultur"; Italy has her new gospel of Fascism; and Russia her communism, and it has been so always. The Jews were the elect of the Lord, and so were the Arabs. Does it not strike you as strange that every country should have the identical notion of having a special mission to reform the world? If I may say so every country has some mission in the world to enrich its culture in some way, and none need lay claim to being chosen of the Lord.

Self-admiration is always a dangerous thing in an individual. It is equally dangerous in the nation for

it makes it self-satisfied and indolent and the world passes by leaving it behind. We have little enough reason to be satisfied with our present lot, with many of our customs, with our excessive religiosity, with the lot of our women and the terrible condition of the masses. What good does it do us to waste our energy and our time in chanting praises of the dead past when the present claims our attention and work awaits us? The world changes and is changing rapidly and if we cannot adapt our society to the new conditions, we are doomed to perish. We have seen what can be done in a brief span of years and even months by a Kamal Pasha or an Amanulla who were not afraid to break through ancient customs and prejudice. What had been done in Turkey and backward Afghanistan can be done in India. But it can only be done in the manner of Kamal Pasha or Amanulla by fearlessly facing obstacles and removing them and not waiting till the crack of doom for slow reform. It is not a choice for you, as it was not a choice for Turkey or Afghanistan between slow and rapid reform. It is a choice between extinction and immediate action. Turkey and Afghanistan chose the latter path and are reckoned to-day as great Nations. What will your choice be?

The world is in a bad way and India specially is in a perilous state in spite of the glitters and superficial splendour of your great cities. There are rumours of war and awful prophecies that the next war

may result in irretrievable disaster to civilisation. But the very excess of evil may hasten the course. Does not our own Gita states 'Great men have come from age to age in this country and elsewhere to help mankind. But greater than any man is the idea which he has embodied. And the conception of Dharma changes from age to age, and in a changing world a custom that was good in past times may be perilous to society to-day. You do not go to Bombay to-day in a bullock cart or fight with bows and arrows. Why stick to customs which were good only in the days of the bullock cart and bows and arrows ?

And the greatman who have come always been rebels against the existing order. Two thousand five hundred years ago the great Buddha proclaimed his gospel of social equality and fought against all privilege, priestly or otherwise. He was a champion of the people against all who sought to exploit them. Then came another great rebel, Christ, and then the Prophet of Arabia who did not hesitate to break and change almost every thing he found. They were realists who saw that the world had outgrown its ancient practices and customs and sought to bring it back to reality. The Avatars of to-day are great ideas which come to reform the world. And the idea of the day is social equality. Let us listen to it and become its instrument to transform the world and make it better place to live in.

I may be a weak instrument capable of doing little.

by myself in spite of my ardent desire to do much. And you individually may be able to do little. But you and I together can do much and working well the awakened youths of this country we can and will achieve something. For youths only can save this country and the world. I do not admire the Fascists but I do admire them for having as their war cry a hymn to youth "Govinezza," and I wish you would also adopt their motto. "Live dangerously". Let our elders seek security and stability. Our quest must be adventure, but adventure is a noble enterprise which promises to bring peace to a distracted world as security and stability to the millions who have it not.

You and I are Indian and to India we owe much but we are human being also and to humanity we also owe a debt. Let us be citizens of the Commonwealth of Empire of youths. That is the only empire to which we can owe allegiance for that is the forerunner of the future federation of the world.

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\*Friends,

I was greatly perturbed by the recent happenings in the country. The execution of Bhagat Singh and his comrades was a reminder of our inability to protect the brave and patriotic youngmen. I have also heard in the afternoon of the tragic happenings at

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\*Pandit Nehru's speech in the All India Students Convention, Karachi held on 26th March 1931.

Cawnpore, culminating in a large number of deaths. It is reported that one of my very dear friends Pandit Ganesh Shanker Vidyarthi, President of the Provincial Congress Committee, had been killed in the course of the rioting. Like the true brave Congressmen as he was, he must have rushed to the point of danger, and must have tried to pacify the people who were killing each other. If he had met his death in that manner, it was as a true Indian should meet it. The tragedy of Cawnpore is the abject lesson that violence used by us, though with the best of motives, is apt to recoil on us and lead to internecine conflict. The only people who profit by it are our opponents. We cannot settle any vital problem in the country to-day, much less the communal problem, by violence, nor could we settle it by temporary pacts or arrangements. Only by attacking the root of the disease could we eradicate it. Youngmen, especially, have to bear the brunt of the work for the solution of these problems. Youngmen must envisage a new order of things and eradicate the evils which make progress impossible. Youngmen must remember that "freedom" and "independence" were mere words till a new order is fashioned which ends inequalities, exploitation and religious bigotry."

"There is a great deal of discussion about truce to-day, but I should like the youth to remember that no living country can accept any settlement which is anything less than complete independence. Any

settlement which barter away a part of freedom, must, necessarily fail, and the struggle will have to be continued. Therefore let young men be quite clear about the ideal of complete freedom and social equality. The time for shouting of slogans has passed away, and young men must act, for action alone counts.

"I believe profoundly that you who are young can build a nation of the strong, a nation of the free.....you are the path finders of to-morrow. You are the builders of greater India. .

"Then go out to the multitudes that wait with hungry hearts for the message of India. Go, and tell them that India lives for a mighty mission. Carthage and Babylonia are gone—India lives on. Rome that dreamt the dream of dominion and conquest, Rome is gone—India lives on. Greece the cradle of culture, the shrine of art and philosophy, Greece is gone—India lives on. Not without a purpose. India to give a mighty message to the nations ; and what greater privilege than this,—to do and die in the service of India "

T. L. Vaswani



wonders. But they must be united in one body in a common service. They must be united in the strength of faith in India and the Indian Ideals. To-day we start the "Bharat Yuvak Sangha," an Order of Young India.

"The very first article of the Order's faith must be faith in "Bharat Dharma." India has not lived for herself. India lives to give the message of the Rishis—the message of the ancient Wisdom—to the world. Let young men be filled with the inspiration of Indian ideals. If they perish, they must perish the hope of India. One important object of the order of Young India should be to study and spread Bharat Dharma. I ask you that are young to turn my thoughts away from the distractions and depression of to-day to the mighty destiny that awaits India. As Upanishad has well declared :—"A man becomes what he thinketh upon." Think, then of what India may be in the coming days. Think of the mighty potentialities within you to make her fulfil her mission to humanity.

"The Bharat Yuvak Sangh should have "ashramas." There must, gradually, be built a network of 'ashrams' throughout the length and breadth of India. I have in my mind a picture of an ideal "ashram." I have not the time to describe the picture to you in its several aspects to-day. I shall be content with an imperfect statement of three or four aspects of the picture. The "ashrama" as I think of it, should among

other things, teach this central truth of national advance:—Be strong. I want India's youth to be the sons of "Shakti." I want every young man to develop strength, and therefore to develop first his body and train it to be a servant of the ideal. To-day young men are weak. Many years ago an Englishman came to Sind. He described the Sindhi as strong in physique. To-day Sindhi young men are weak in body. Coming to the Punjab, rich in noble traditions and memories of the martial spirit, what do I see? The Punjabi young men, too are declining physically. And my esteemed friend, the chairman of the Reception Committee, Mr. P. K. Ghosh will agree with me that the Bengalis, too, have declined physically. I want the young to be strong. India needs strength—all possible strength to-day, strength of body, strength of mind, strength of the Atman. No weak-nation may hope to be free. Look not for freedom to council debates, look not for freedom to parchments of Parliament. Freedom will grow out of 'Shakti.' Be strong. Weakness is a sin. And believe me, the body is the temple of God. How true is the ancient Sanskrit saying, "*Shariram Brahma mandiram*"! The first lesson, I would have the young learn in the 'ashrama' is—"be strong," the second is "be simple." Indeed in true simplicity is strength. A Lahore friend told me that young Punjabis are running after fashions. Fashion is folly. Study the lives of India's great men. They have been simple. The 'rishis' of Aryavarta,—

how simple they were ! The heroes and teachers of India,—from the mighty days of Shri Ram Chandra, down to our own dark days,—illuminated by the life and example of Mahatma Gandhi—have been simple.

"In the 'ashrama' as I think of it, I would also have every young man observe this rule that he must do at least one act of service every day. 'Sewa' service of the poor, is what enlives and enriches life. Service of the poor is the end of knowledge.

"We stand on the threshold of a new age. Shall we have a new India,—a liberated India? We will lay the foundation of a new nation. In every province are needed young men, who would be sons of strength and courage, 'shakti' worshippers. Such youngmen, filled with the Indian ideal and rich in wealth of renunciation and sacrifice will open a new chapter in our history. Young men, who would be "Bhikshus" in spirit united together in the service of love, can work miracles.

"Believe me, they wait for you—the multitudes in the country. They wait for you. They wait for the message in towns and villages. There is a beautiful story in an ancient book. A boy says to his mother :—"Mother ! You have spoken oft to me of Shri Krishna. Is Krishna alive ? "Yes," the mother says, "the Lord is not dead, he lives." "I see him not," says the boy. And the mother says, "If you would see him, my child you must practise on Sadhan." And he says, "I am ready, teach me." And the mother

says, "My boy if you would meet Krishna, the Lord, offer every day, this little simple prayer, with faith and love in thy heart, "May I, O Lotus-eyed ! be a sacrifice to thee."

Message of India "Young men ! offer this ancient prayer. Purify and strengthen your life with this ancient aspiration. "May I O Lotus-eyed, be a sacrifice to Thee ? Then go out to the multitudes that wait with hungry hearts for the message of India,—the message of "Bharat Dharma". Go, and tell them that India lives for a mighty mission. Carthage and Babylonia are gone; India lives on. Rome that dreamt the dream of dominion and conquest, Rome is gone,—India lives on. Greece, the cradle of culture, the shrine of art and philosophy, Greece is gone,—India lives on. Not without a purpose. India lives to give a mighty message to the nations ; and what greater privilege than this,—to do and die in the service of India ? Go and spread this message in town after town, village after village. And with the beauty of the ancient ideal, hypnotise the whole of Hindustan !"

(3)

\* "I come to you as a Bhikshu in India long ago appeared. Millions do him reverence to-day He became Buddha. In his heart was compassion for all creatures. In his heart was love for humanity and he said to his disciples : 'Go ye my disciples and ask

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\* Prof. Naswani's address delivered by him at The Karachi Youth Conference met on the 27th May, 1928 at Karachi.

people, if they keep remembrance. I—a Bhikshu come to you with the question: 'Do you keep remembrance? Do you remember her—India, the mother,—in your dress and diet, in your studies and daily life? Do you remember Bharate? I know many of us talk of her but when did trick of talk help people? Look not for freedom in talk; in noise and excitement. What is needed is Shakti and Shakti grows in silence. Strength, more strength is what will take the nation forward. Not paper resolutions, but silent resolves have made nations great.

"India needs Ashrams for the young. In the nation's youth is my hope. They can make the nation new, but they must be bound together in the service of India. The Bharat Yuvak Sangha is meant to link together youngmen in different provinces for a common service through common love and reverence for India and her essential message is love for all races, for all religions. I believe that all nations are in a measure, small or great, reflectors of the one light—the light of the spirit. I believe that we must build the national in the universal; we must build a new nation in Truth and Love. I believe also that a true international must reflect itself in the national. I believe that the world is waiting for a new type of nationalism—a nationalism that will be human, that will be spiritual. I believe also that the world is waiting for a new type of the international that will not be abstract, but a concrete international that will show

itself in national institutions and make for the revival and reconstruction of the life of nations. In other words I believe that international without national is empty even as the national without the international is blind. We need both and I may say that this ideal inspires the youth movement concerning which I am to speak.

"I attach great importance to bodily culture. To-day youngmen go about with broken bodies. I often say body-building is nation-building. I believe this to be profoundly true. Ancient Greece was great and I have asked myself the question what was the secret of the greatness of ancient Greece. Ancient Greece was highly intellectual but the civilization of ancient Greece was not merely of the intellectual type; her civilization was also aesthetic. More I study the history of Humanity the more I find that every vital civilization has been in a measure, small or great, a synthetic civilization. I believe the note of the coming age—the note of the new civilization is going to be built through fellowship between East and West. One fundamental note of the new civilization will be a note of integration. India fell because matter was sundered from the spirit. The body was separated from mind. India fell when she developed a contempt for the physical. Over and over again in the pages of Upanishads the Rishis sing that matter is a manifestation of the mind. I desire that body and mind, body and soul, which for a long time have been

kept apart, should be reintegrated in the life of India. The conception of the spiritual life as divorced from the earth,—divorced from the material or physical needs—is to be combated. Youngmen should build up their bodies.

"I want youngmen to study lives of great heroes of India and those of the heroes of the other parts of the world. Let youngmen study the lives of Bhishma, Sivaji, Prithviraj, Hanuman, McSiney, Garibaldi, Abraham Lincoln and other great men of action. So will youth grow in the spirit of courage. In every month one day may be set apart as sacred to the memory of a great hero."

"The Sangha believe also in the value of ancient culture. It seems to me there are two extremes in regard to this subject. There are some who think that Indian culture is useless. I am afraid this was the view of Macaulay who said that the whole library of oriental literature was not worth a single shelf of accidental library. He thought Indian culture as useless. Then there is the other extreme. According to some Indian culture is perfect. I do not believe that any culture is final. I believe that human cultures progress as civilization progresses. Recognising that Indian culture is not the final, I submit in all humility that Indian culture has a great message for the modern world. Indian culture is permeated with the spirit of a great ideal and I want that the high,

"spiritual ideal to flow again into the life of India and modern world."

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\*You have choosen for the chair a man who is lover of silence and seclusion. I belive that silence is strength. And I have breathed out, again and again, an aspiration that I may have the strength to speak without words. I feel grateful that you have given me a corner in the temple of your hearts. What have I done to deserve it? I only know that I have come to you with nothing but love in my heart.—love and faith. I love the students. I love the young. I have faith in them. The nation of to-morrow is being made not in the paper resolution of our Conferences and Councils but in the deep, silent resolves of some among the students of to-day.

You and such of you in,different parts of India I salute as the builders of to-morrow. The people of Socrates the Yogi generated forces which shaped the thought and life of Europe. The young men who rallied round Mazzoni and Garibaldi gave a new life to their nation long before Mussolini and his Black Shirts arose to rebuild a new United Italy. Wesley and Whitefield, students of the "Holy Club," initiated a revival which, in the words of the English historian Green, "changed the whole tone of English Society". Buddha and Shankara! Each was a young man when

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\* Prof. Vaswanis' address at the Bihar Student's Conference at Mathiani on Oct. 4, 1928.



he started on his world mission. Each awakened India to a new life. The young have been the saviours of societies and nations. Somewhere is given a pretty legend. It tells of an invisible bell softly swinging and sounding wonderful music. And all who will keep the inner chamber of their hearts open, may hear,—the story says,—how the invisible bell rings and sings in holy twilight. My silence and seclusion have been filled with my cries to God:—O Thou of the Ancient Days! Who will lead again India, our Ancient Mother, to the promised land? "And then in the holy darkness before the dawn, one thinks, I have heard an invisible bell ring and sing to me a mighty hope, a mighty faith:—"Let not thy heart be sad" The nation's youth yet will build, rebuild—India into a nation of strong—a nation of the free!"

In this hope, in his faith:—

"In all countries, either Asiatic or European, youth have played and are still playing a prominent part in the political, social and economic revolution that has brought about a regeneration or restoration of fallen nations or oppressed countries.

"The economic revival of Germany after the Great War was no doubt due to the strenuous efforts of the youth. The political emancipation of Ireland was the result of concerted and well-equipped youth organisation of that country. In the Egyptian struggle for independence the youth again are the standard bearers of National honour and National freedom. The fas-

cist movement in Italy is but another phase of universal activity as the young Turks and Afghan is selecting against the old enervating customs and superstitions of their respective countries. But the most recent and perhaps the most inspiring of all examples is that of China, and the achievement of young Nationalist China are one of the most wonderful political phenomena of modern times.

" Thus when the youth of all civilised countries in the world is awakened and carrying on incessant struggle and rebellion against all the existing evils and stagnation, even when the Afghan youth, who but yesterday was considered as belonging to a semi-civilized and fanatic hill tribe, is up and has joined the general ranks and file of the youth reformers of the world, is it possible, is it conceivable that the Indian youth alone should lay behind ? Nay that is not possible. The time has come, indeed it is long past, when the energetic spirits, enthusiastic and patriotic youth in India is also expected to awake and shake off the paralysing effects of long lethargy and join his youthful comrades in the world, to do service to his dear motherland and to help and co-operate in reshaping his country and thus, in reconstructing the world."

"To my mind, the necessity of such a youth movement in a country like India suffering under a foreign domination for years is much greater than in those countries that have already achieved their freedom and hence the great responsibility and greater duties are imposed on an Indian youth than the youth of any other country, and I feel confident that the youth will most readily and willingly respond to this clarion call to duty and unflinchingly and ungrudgingly discharge his patriotic duty at the most critical juncture in the history of the unfortunate country."

K. F. Nariman.

## IV

### K. F. NARIMAN

Friends,

This is the first movement amongst the youths of various provinces which has brought together in a spirit of true comradeship and companionship the students of various educational and other institutions, not only of the same city or town but of the same province and ultimately of the whole country. This assembly to-day is a self-evident proof of that fact cannot be gainsaid. For want of general organization and opportunity hitherto, for all these years, there was a feeling of aloofness and isolation amongst the students even of the same college or institution, although an Indian student is not of a secluded nature by temperament. The Youth Movement is the first organized effort to bring the students' world together as one class, and such organisation not only fosters the spirit of harmony and universal brotherhood but also serves as a channel for ventilating their common grievances. What a wonderful and decisive effect such concerted and organised action has on the authorities is proved by the recent instances in the

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\*Mr. Nariman's presidential speech in Youth Congress which met at Desbandhunagar Calcutta on the 25th December 1928.

Bombay Presidency, when the Government was compelled to give up a proposal, on account of the Youth League's agitation, to enhance school and college fees.

This spirit of comradeship and fellowship amongst students and youths of different communities and sects engendered from early years, is bound to produce salutary effect on the large and grave communal problems that are so baneful to the public of our country to-day. Often when elders are wrangling through the press or platform and exhibiting and betraying narrow communal fanatic views, the youths of all communities in their conclave are engaged in solving large national issues, and I feel confident that if this spirit of inter-communal good-will and harmony is encouraged through this organization the future generation will at least be free from communal canker that is rotting our public life to-day.

I look upon this huge pandal as a vast recruiting office, my valiant and brave friend Syt. Subhash Bose and his colleagues and co-workers as so many recruiting officers, and you my young friends, brothers and sisters delegates and visitors, as so many young applicants anxiously awaiting to be recruited and enlisted in the Army of Swaraj, not at the command of the king or constituted foreign authority like mercendries, but at the command of your dear Motherland, your country and the constituted National authority, a

gallant band of patriotic volunteers.

It has been and it shall ever be our endeavour to see the Youth movement in any part of the country does not remain a mere deliberative body, its only function being to meet at stated intervals, at fixed places and merely discussing problems and passing resolution. That will only result in the addition of one more glorified debating society in the country which may undoubtedly add some more glamour and zest to the political life in the country but will not suffice to achieve the real object in view. The elders can afford to deliberate, discuss and pass resolutions and pile them up in files for the edification of future generation. It is the privilege, duty and responsibility of youth to go further and take actual effective steps to give effect to the resolutions they have debated, discussed and passed. That is how the Youth movement in Bombay has become a new dynamic force to be reckoned with in the political as well as social activities of the Presidency.

Another grave danger against which I wish you to be guarded, is the fact very often noticed in this land, as perhaps in all countries, viz., that a movement newly started displays a good deal of enthusiasm, energy and spirit in the beginning, but in the course of a few years, that newly kindled enthusiasm and spirit dies out and lethargy creeps in and the movement loses all its life and force. I do hope that will

not be the fate of this Youth Movement.

Youth Movement all the world over is new phase in the modern political, economic and social history of the world. In all countries, either Asiatic or European Youths have played and are still playing a prominent part in the political, social or economic revolutions that has brought about a regeneration or restoration of fallen nations or oppressed countries and a brief survey of youth activities in some country would be instructive as well as inspiring to this newly awakened spirit of youth in this country. The economic revival of Germany after the Great War was no doubt due to the strenuous efforts of the youth. The political emancipation of Ireland was the result of concerted and well equipped Youth organization of that country. In the Egyptian struggle for Independence, the youth again are the standard-bearers of National Honour and National freedom. The Fascist Movement in Italy is but another phase of universal youth activity as the young Turk and Afghan is rebelling against the old enervating customs and superstitions of their respective countries. But the most recent and perhaps the most inspiring of all examples is that of China, and the achievement of young Nationalist China are one of the most wonderful political phenomena of modern time.

Thus when the youth of all civilised countries in the world is awakened and carrying on incessant

struggle and rebellion against all the existing evils and stagnation, even when the Afghan youth, who but till yesterday was considered as belonging to a semi-civilised and fanatic hill tribe, is up and has joined the general rank and file of youth reformers of the world, is it possible, is it conceivable that the Indian youth alone should lag behind? Nay, that is not possible. The time has come, indeed it is long past, when the energetic, spirited, enthusiastic and patriotic youth in India is also expected to awake and arise and shake off the paralysing effects of long lethargy and join his youthful comrades in the world, to do service to his dear Motherland and help and co-operate in reshaping his country and thus, in reconstructing the world.

To my mind, the necessity of such a Youth Movement in a country like India, suffering under a foreign domination for years is much greater than in those countries that have already achieved their freedom, and hence the grave responsibilities and greater duties are imposed on an Indian youth than the youth of any other country, and I feel confident that the youth will most readily and willingly respond to this clarion call to duty and unflinchingly and ungrudgingly discharge his patriotic duty at the most critical juncture in the history of this unfortunate country.

Friends, I speak with confidence of the Indian youth, because in my short experience as the president



of the Bombay Presidency Youth League, I am proud to maintain that the youth of this country is in no way inferior but in many respects superior to the youth of any other country in the world. He has the same devotion to duty, undying patriotism, and love for his country, courage, spirit of self-sacrifice, and above all, burning desire to be free—all virtuous traits and qualities that crowned the youth activities of other countries with success. All that is needed, is a proper, well disciplined and well regulated organization, a bold, courageous and disinterested leadership and what is most important, a change in the mental outlook and politically unhealthy atmosphere and surrounding, which serves as a retrograde drag, and prevents the normal development and progress. Therefore, the first function and duty of a Youth Movement in any country, and more particularly in India, is to remove all degenerating causes that are disastrous to the natural and healthy progress of juvenile spirit and mental development in proper directions.

Even under ordinary or favourable conditions, the nice imposition of a foreign domination particularly for years, is bound to have almost degenerating and fatal effect on the mental, physical, intellectual or normal development of a nation. But when to that enervating circumstances is added a pernicious and perverse system of education, deliberately introduced to emasculate and kill the manhood of a nation,

the results are bound to be more disastrous and greater effort would be necessary to restore that nation to its original greatness and glory.

From the early days of the East India Company, as the ancient records prove, the educational policy of the Government was laid down not with a view to educate the people in the real sense of the word, i.e., to develop in the proper direction their mental, intellectual and physical qualities so as to fit them for the duties and responsibilities of a patriot or citizen, but in the words of Lord Macaulay, 'merely to train up young natives for employment in Government offices and administrative services,' so that the majority of Indians never went beyond the stage of looking upon education as the avenue that leads to government service or learn something in Universities in order to be able to earn something in life. That low conception unfortunately dominated and still dominates us to a great extent. The other satanic step adopted by the Government is the introduction of the Arms Act resulting in physical emasculation.

The idea and aim of education in every civilised country in the world is twofold. One is academical attainments with a view to equip one-self for the struggle, in other words as a means of livelihood, but the other and the higher ideal is to build up a real manly character, to develop fit his mental and physical qualities, to make him courageous, self-reliant and

independent, and to him in every respect for the greater and higher responsibilities and duties of a citizen and patriot for his country, by acquainting him with the past glories and greatness of his motherland and the achievements of his national heroes. But in this unfortunate land, the second and more important part of education is not only neglected, but positively discouraged. A little child in his primary school begins his scholastic career with silly lessons about British kings and their kindness to India, the protection they afford, the happiness and security they confer on this country and, what disasters would come to this country if that protection was withdrawn.

Referring to an incident in the Bombay Council, the President said that he was once told by the Minister that the lives of patriots form dangerous literature. The lives and teachings of Indian patriots and national heroes are dangerous literature for Indian students, but silly lives of stupid British kings are useful knowledge that must be crammed by our youth at the enormous sacrifice of time, labour and money.

That this policy of resisting all efforts to nationalise the education and develop a spirit of patriotism in the youth, is universally followed all over India, and is not confined to our Presidency alone, is further demonstrated by similar disgraceful attempt in Madras where by a Government Resolution such patriotic

and national songs known as "Bharathi Songs" were proscribed and the proscription still continues in spite of a Resolution of the Madras Legislative Council demanding its cancellation, particularly from schools and colleges, lest the youth be inspired with a love and devotion for the country and make an effort to redeem it from a foreign yoke. I suppose the Government would like your youth to sing aloud "Rule Britannia, Britannia rules the waves," and such meaningless effusions, and when all the chorus girls of the Empire including Mahatajahs and Members of Govenment will join to sing the chorus.

But the most recent and the most courageous instance is the one in connection with Victoria Jubilee Technical Institute in Bombay. As a part of training in the Textile Department, the students are asked to weave a portrait on cloth and these portraits are preserved in the College Exhibition. Under the direction of a European Principal, the students are required to weave the portraits of the Principal himself or European members of the Board of Management, or of persons of scientific distinction, such as Viceroys, Governors, Ministers, etc. By what process of reasoning these officials become persons of scientific distinction, it is difficult to understand. But last year a patriotic student desired to weave a portrait of Mahatma Gandhi, and when the principal came to know of it, he at once issued an order prohibiting it and the Board of Management upheld that order.

want you, my young friends, to appreciate and understand the very grave implications contained in this recent instance.

Added to this anti-nationalist and anti-patriotic efforts to degenerate and denationalise our youth, further mischief is done often by distortion of history, both Indian and English, so as to exaggerate the supposed dark sides in Indian character and magnify the imaginary virtues in British. The Black Hole of Calcutta is prominently chronicled in every edition of the Indian History, though, subsequent investigations show that incident either a complete myth or half truth, to create an impression on the Indian youth that the Indians were cruel, treacherous and barbarous, and that they should not be trusted. But the blackest deed of Jalianwala Bagh, exposing the butchery and brutality of a British General in more modern times has not yet found a place in even the latest edition of Indian History. I remember when at school, I was given a graphic description of a supposed willy and tricky Bengali Brahmin named Nand Kumar who was supposed to have committed some fraud on the Company's officers. What could be the motive of introducing such trivial unimportant incident in History to be taught to our boys, except to impress upon them that Brahmins are dishonest and not to be trusted? But the worst exploits of the high European officials of the Development Department in Bombay, exposing a system of outrageous frauds

to the extent of crores of rupees, will be quietly glossed over and every attempt will be made to bush up the shabby affair. Thus, throughout the course, if you make a careful survey, you will find a systematic effort to lower the Indian character, Indian achievements, and to glorify and extol the British as the gallant saviours of the land and its people.

To counteract this move on the part of educational authorities, the Bombay Youth League propose to start study classes to be run on purely national lines where all literature and work exposing the dark side of the British Empire and the bright side of India alone will be permitted and students will be given facilities and opportunities to study the life work and speeches of illustrious National workers.

What other country but India could tolerate and meekly submit to face national outrages as are committed on our National Leaders like L. Lajpat Rai or Pundit Jawaharlal Nehru by police hooligans and criminals in this country? The warlike province of Punjab, inhabited by the most martial race in the country, cannot enforce even a moderate and just demand for an inquiry into the death of its most beloved and revered leader and in that farcical and fraudulent body, wrongly described as the Legislative Council, only 22 male members voted for that Resolution, while the rest of them, important, made an exhibition of their effeminacy and impotency by not possessing sufficient courage even to vote for such a

modest demand.

My young friends, I want you to appreciate that you are the present watch dogs and the future owners of this ancient and most valuable heritage; you are the present trustees and as such, it is your duty to preserve and maintain intact the National honour and self-respect of this ancient land and its equally ancient peoples.

Do not for a minute believe, because you have the misfortune to be ruled by foreigners that you and your country are in any way inferior to your rulers, and that any other country can claim to be your superior. Even to-day, after the degenerating influence of 150 years of foreign rule, your country can boast of greater personalities and men in various spheres of life than the so-called Mother country of England or any other European country. From amongst the whole nation of shopkeepers I will challenge them to produce an individual who can be placed on the same high moral pedestal as Mahatma Gandhi. In the sphere of modern science, your presidency ought to be proud of that great scientist Sir Jagadish Bose who is revolutionising the scientist world. In sublime poetry, literature and philosophy, whom will they point out from the whole of England to match, with Dr. Rabindra Nath Tagore, worshipped and adored by all lovers of art and literature in every part of the world? What statesman, scholar or patriot will they find in England to equal Lokmenya Tilak? MacDonald

Baldwin, Johnson, Burks or a Burckenhead is their limit, mere mediocres, who but for opportunities afforded to a ruling race might not have risen higher than ordinary traders or head clerks.

My young friends, I do not desire to bring these facts home to you simply with a view to make you swelled-headed, arrogant like our British opponents. I only desire to kindle in your mind a legitimate national pride, national awakening and an intense desire to be free. Once that feeling is awakened in you, it will not be necessary to carry on any more educative propaganda such as Conferences and Congresses, but that awakened spirit will itself lead you to discharge your duties as a patriot and as a citizen, creating a feeling of self-confidence and self-reliance; making you resent all national insults and humiliations and make you rebel with courage against all evils, social and economic.

The youth of a country is not only a present trustee and future owner of the country but the youth mentality is the very foundation of nationalism and patriotism of any nation, and the solidarity and weakness of that political structure or edifice raised will depend upon the sounder foundation, and the political blacklegs and traitors will have no place in the public life of the country. When that situation arises, I feel certain that a silent and bloodless evolution, almost unnoticed, will work out the political salvation of the country.



But, my young friends, side by side with the mental and physical process of development, it is necessary that you should also be engaged in some useful constructive work, and I may assure you that your unfortunate country affords ample opportunities and vast field for much service and sacrifice. In your days of happiness and comfort, in your hour of joy and triumph, think of the suffering humanity and extend a helping hand to millions of your countrymen rotting in thousands of villages, steeped in poverty and ignorance, denied both the light of God and light of Learning.

That the youths in India possess the same potentialities to fulfil the same great mission for their country, though perhaps by a different method, is amply demonstrated by the recent Bardoli struggle. The triumph of Bardoli was mainly, if not entirely, due to the courageous band of youth volunteers from various "Ashrams" and National Institutions of Gujerat. This self-sacrificing and devoted band of youthful workers formed the well disciplined and well equipped army of Sardar Valabhai Patel. They were the backbone of the whole struggle, and with remarkable courage, fearless independence, readiness and willingness to suffer and sacrifice and a divine devotion to duty this gallant band of Indian youth halted the mighty power of the Indian Empire and instilled similar courage and spirit of Independence in the rustic peasants of Bardoli and ultimately led them to-

triumphant success. These courageous youths from various Swaraj Ashrams were not perhaps brilliant University scholars in the modern sense of the term. Neither did they appear quite polished and up to date. University "boys" are fastidious and fashionable. Quite simple in their habits, simpler in their mode of lives, actually leading the life of a villager, but at a moment of supreme crises, they displayed a mentality and character, and power of resistance that won for them the admiration and applause of the whole country.

As a course of training,—some of the members of the Bombay Youth League, both male and female, were sent to Bardoli Ashram, and a few days' contact with their comrades, exerted an enormous influence over them, so that on their return these youths were entirely different individuals, discarding their fashionable attire and all their pleasure resorts like clubs and cinemas. They were burning with a desire to render some service to the unfortunate and oppressed peasants of Bardoli, and in response to a call from the Sardar, within half an hour about 15 young volunteers of both sexes started for Surat, ready to court arrest and jail.

The principalism and object of the Youth Movement in the country should be to create a future generation of citizens who would imbibe the beauties of culture, both Eastern and Western, without emasculating or extinguishing their Indian Manhood, and mentally martial spirit and character, and con-

certed efforts should be made, as it were, to 'Bardolise' the whole country by starting numerous 'Swaraj' Ashrams in various districts all over the country. These "Swaraj" Ashrams like the 'Al-Azhars' in Egypt and Gaelic Leagues in Ireland should be the recruiting camps to enlist and prepare an army of national service. In the meantime, these institutions can train up the youths of the country, so as to kindle *a National Pride in the rising generation, to make them extremely sensitive of National Honour and resent and resist all efforts to humiliate or insult our country or Nation, to create a confidence in self, making them self-reliant, self-sacrificing and courageous and all that resulting in a grim determination in youthful mind to gain freedom for this country, and a firm resolve that though by accident they are born as slaves, they shall not die as slaves "Bande-Mataram."*

(2)

"This Youth Movement is a new phase in the political and social life of the world, and if we take a survey of recent events, either in the east or west we will find the great revolutions have been brought about mainly by these new organisations and the awakening of the youth of different countries.

"I therefore, want to impress upon you, young friends, the first and the foremost, you must be

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\*Mr. Narayana's Presidential address at the Andhra Youth Conference held at Perwada on 3rd Nov. 1929.

sincere and honest in your dealings no matter what the consequences may be.....

"I find that youth naturally feel elated at what they rightly consider to be a great triumph and recognition for their activities. But at the same time I must warn you, and very gravely remind you, that this compliment, tribute or honour to the youth carries with it its grave responsibility, its very serious duties which go hand in hand with the privilege. I ask you in all earnestness, and through you, the youths of the whole country now that the helm and stewardship of national affairs is placed in the hands of the youth, are you or are you not prepared to fulfil the big promises, the tall assurances that you have been giving to the nation and the country for years past? Now that the opportunity has been given to you, will you come up to the expectations and lead the country to the desired goal a goal for the attainment of which the elders, both in and outside the Congress have been struggling for generations past? The choice is yours either you attain the highest glory or you fail, and if you fail you sink back into the mire, and then for God's sake talk no more of the grand performances and the great achievements of the youth, if this God-sent opportunity given to you is not availed of to its fullest extent.

"Therefore the first function and duty of the Youth Movement in any country and more particularly in India, is to remove all degenerating causes that

are disastrous to the natural and healthy mental development.

"It is not only your right and privilege, but it is your first and last duty to take active part in all the burning political, social, and economic questions of the day, for after all you are the future lords of the land and as such none is more vitally affected by this question than yourself, and it is preposterous and absurd to ask to you to be unconcerned about matters that are going to affect your everyday life in future.

"We must be prepared for the grave struggle, for a determined opposition, for enormous sacrifices and for daily sufferings, without which no country and no nation has attained its freedom.

"My young friends, the choice is yours. In the words of the great poet "there is always a tide in the affairs of men, which taken at the flood leads on to fortune." Such a tide in the affairs of the youth of the country is now approaching. If you seize the opportunity and take the tide at the flood, it is bound to lead you to fortune, and what better or greater fortune could you desire than the fortune of attaining your goal of freedom? Make a firm resolve from to-day, before you leave this place that though you are born a bondman and a slave under foreign domination you shall not die in bondage but shall attain freedom and emancipation, both political, social and economic at any cost."

(3)

\*To-day, presiding over this assembly of youths, my duty is to humbly place before you the mission of the youths not only in the districts and provinces but in the whole country, that mission is not confined to petty local issues or to redress local grievances here and there. That mission of youth is higher; nobler, more glorious, more divine and universal; it covers all the spheres of life, it includes social, political, communal, cultural and in short all problems, effecting human life and human action, human happiness and in one word it is the redemption of humanity all round. It has to break through all barriers, override all old conventions, condemn both local orthodoxy and foreign bureaucracy and strip the society of all the enervating and degenerating customs and habits. I know the task seems to be Herculean and almost impossible to achieve but do not despair and be not down-hearted. Howsoever difficult the task, howsoever thorny the path, with faith in yourself, with courage in both hands, with organisation and concerted action, all abstacles that may at first appear insurmountable, can be overcome and the thorny path will be strewn with roses. The word impossible is only to be found in the dictionary of fools. It certainly does not exist in the dictionary of youths. In order to make this apparently Herculean task easier and to

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\*Extracts from Mr. Narayana's Presidential address at the Kerala Students' Conference on May 3, 1931.

bring it with the limited scope of human capacity, let us proceed step by step and tackle one problem after another.

Let me deal first with the problem which appears to be most pressing and needing our immediate attention. So far as the country is concerned, that one pressing, all absorbing and most important problem is the attainment of complete political emancipation of the country. A satisfactory solution of that question will ipso facto smoothen our path and clear our way for the eradication and removal of many other evils. Therefore, whilst not completely neglecting other issues, my appeal to the youth of the Province and the youth of the country is to concentrate all your energy, spend all your power and strength, in short sacrifice all other issues for the present and devote yourself wholly and solely to the one fundamental, vital all-absorbing issue, *viz*, the attainment of Purna Swaraj or Complete Independence for the ancient and glorious land. Of what avail your degrees and your gilded robes and of what value your medals and scholarships so long as the chain of slavery and of foreign bondage disgraces your whole existence, stunts your intellect, dwarfs both your body and your soul, makes you impotent dummies in your own country, neither respected at home nor honoured abroad; rather be an illiterate and ignorant free-man than an intellectual cultured degraded slave, the higher the education the greater the disgrace and

stigma of slavery. Swami Vivekananda once in disgust advised all the students to throw off all their books, robes, sanads, all paraphernalia of University life, into the nearest sea and turn back with greater leisure and better inclination to work for the emancipation of the country.

My young friends, I am not exaggerating, I am not flattering. I am not paying empty compliments when I say that youth is both the national asset and hope of the country. The elders might ponder and deliberate, might frame schemes and pass resolutions, might draw up elaborate and militant programmes, and issue appeals, all that merely remain on the paper and burden the records of Congress offices, unless the youths of the country come forward and respond to that call and appeal and execute the words into action, convert paper schemes into active help and working programme. Without your active help and co-operation the whole structure would fall and no movement can succeed. "Study the modern or ancient political history of any country. Ireland, Russia, China, Turkey, or any other country, big or small, in West or East, the War of Independence has been fought and won with the army of enthusiastic, patriotic, self-sacrificing youths and I have not the least doubt in my mind that similar victory will be won for the country also by the same young and rising generation of our Motherland. My hope and prophecy is based on personal experience and



personal contact. I can say with pride and confidence that the youth of the country is in no way inferior but in many respects superior to the youth of any other country in the world. So they possess the same self-sacrificing spirit, the same moral courage and dash and, above all, the same will and determination to attain freedom. What is wanting is only a proper organisation and lead and immediate steps to remove the petrograde effects of a pernicious system of education. We have often heard and read severe condemnation from various sources of this educational system that is deliberately devised to serve the foreign domination and not intended to serve the usual good purpose of helping national growth and developments of a normal mind and intellect into healthy, national patriotic and useful citizenship. I will only quote a few recent instances to illustrate how systematic attempts are being made by our present day rulers, to turn out "Loyalists," clerks, and dummies and prevent the healthy growth of true nationalism and patriotism in our rising generation. A few years back when I was a member of the farcical body called Legislative Council in Bombay, I asked one or two pertinent questions to the Indian Minister of Education, I enquired of the Hon. Minister whether he did not think it more desirable to introduce in the schools and colleges' curriculum the lives of great Indian patriots and heroes, whether it would not be more useful for students to know more about the

great men and women of their own land, rather than be stuffed with such silly stories about kings and queens of England centuries ago. What useful purpose does it serve for our students to know how many wives had King Henry VIII or what dresses were worn by Queen Elizabeth and how many were her lovers and how gallant was Sir Walter Raleigh etc. The poor Indian Minister was in a very embarrassing position and for a long time hesitated knowing not what reply to make. Ultimately the European Home Member came to his rescue and prompted a reply which the Indian gramophone faithfully reproduced. The reply was, as expected, that the lives, speeches and writings of Indian National leaders and heroes is a dangerous study for Indian students and therefore it must be eschewed. It is safer and better for them to know about the false pomp and bogus glory of Great Britain and hence that study must continue. If our students after studying the life of Lokmanya Tilak and Mahatma Gandhi, become so many more miniature Tilaks and Gandhis, where would be the safety for our rulers? If one Gandhi could shake the foundation of the British Empire, production of many more even on a miniature scale would only result in making our so called trustees quit the land, bag and baggage or even without any luggage because baggage belongs to us. That is the underlying motive governing the whole system of education in the country. The well-known British principle as usual comes into operation. Safety and

security for self first, benefits and advantages to others afterwards. Similarly, another disgraceful episode happened in a Bombay College recently which further illustrates as to what length this selfish policy of safety-first carries them. In the Technical College of Bombay, an institution maintained by Indian Funds, attended by Indian students but as usual controlled and managed by bosses from abroad, part of the training consists of embossing on a cloth some figure or picture.

Every year students are required to emboss a picture of some tag-rag Johny, may be the Principal of the College, his Memsab or the Collector or even an Engine driver, provided he belongs to the heaven-born race of the West. One patriotic student conceived the idea of embossing the picture of Mahatma Gandhi. The Principal was enraged at such a monstrous idea. The dangerous picture of the apostle of peace and good-will was banned. It created a stir in the student population, an intensive agitation was started, strikes were declared and after nearly two years of vigorous propaganda the ban was removed. It is needless to comment on a disgraceful episode in an Indian Educational Institution in the so-called *Urba Prima* in India. It is the same story every where. Had you not experienced similar absurdities in the South? Were not national and patriotic songs banned in schools and colleges and their national anthem recited? If

you sing "Rule Britannia" the whole staff and the Educational Minister and the Governor will join the chorus and cry 'Anchor' but if you make an effort to sing a patriotic song even so innocent and sweet as 'Bande Mataram' the authorities will prick their ears, will smell revolution, inflict penalties and even go to the length of rusticating the offender. Sing the song as they desire but with slight alternation. "Rule Britannia, Britannia, rule the waves but Indian shall never be Britain's slaves."

Is there any wonder then, that we find in our midst so many cultured slaves with slavish mentality, diffident and distrustful, believing in the inevitability and indispensability of British Rule, intellectual cowards and moral sycophants, that is or at least used to be the dark picture of our University product. I have often inquired of many young students with a supposed brilliant University career, as to what was their mission in life after the termination of their studies. Formally most of them gave replies that caused depression and distress to my mind. Their ambition was to get a Government job with a fat salary and false pomp, if possible a Minister or Executive Councillor, to be able to possess dainty cars, a palatial bungalow, some high sounding title to give a position in society and last but not the least a beautiful and fashionable lady to share his pomp and glory and beget a progeny of high class slaves like himself? What a sad picture of life! I see no

difference between their lives and the lives of well-bred, high class, trained race-horses. They too are well-looked after. They too serve and above all earn, sometimes more than the salaries of Executive Councillors and Ministers. Don't they bring high dividends on the turf? Then what is the differentiating point between artistic animals like well-bred race horses and artistic men, who only earn fat salaries to live like gluttons, an extravagant and luxurious life and have no other mission to fulfil. I hope there is not one in this large gathering whose thought is so low and whose mission is so selfish. Let your watch word be "Service" and service to suffering humanity, sacrifice to redeem your country, suffer to your utmost capacity to break the chain of bondage. In order to qualify and enable you to be fit for that higher and nobler mission of life, it is necessary first to awaken in you a national pride and national consciousness.

My young friends, just imagine for a moment what your fore-fathers were and what your country was, centuries before the advent of Britishers. You need not study the lying Indian and English Histories to know our ancient greatness and glory; for, the elders of the country, the modern city of Karachi had sent a message for the youth of the country. I bring an inspiring and a more pathetic message from the ancient ruins, mausoleum and monument of Mohan-ji-Daro. Perhaps,

excavations in Sind, about 200 miles from Karachi, has unearthed and laid bare before the world, the most ancient civilization, culture, wealth, learning, philosophy and religion of ancient India. Not two or four centuries old but even hostile critics put it to at least 5,000 years old and some students even take it back to 7,000 years. What wonderful ruins! the articles discovered are preserved in an exhibition, though the more valuable and architectural articles are removed to England. I challenge any modern architect, any modern scientist, any modern expert, to produce anything, half so beautiful, so scientific, so cultural and so rich as these articles made 7,000 years ago, before the age of machinery and modern appliances. That is but one instance. There are hundreds of such monuments scattered about in various parts of the country. Some discovered, some underground; the caves of Ajanta, the ruins of Somnath, the Queen of Buildings known as the Taj, ancient temples, palaces, forts, mosques. Is there any other country in the world, which possesses such convincing and incontrovertible proof of its ancient glory, wealth, learning, philosophy, religion and general greatness? Hundreds of travellers and tourists come from thousands of miles and are lost in amazement and wonder. My young friends, that sight and scene has always made me sad and pathetic. I have seen patriots shedding tears before these ancient monuments. All that civilization, learning, wealth and greatness existed when our so-called rulers' country

and their race was in a semi-barbarous and half-naked state. Great Britain was not even born 7,000 years ago and for years after that, they were living more like monkeys than man. It was the ancient civilization of yours that first taught our western brethren human methods and human ways of life. And what a sad tragedy to-day that ours is the only country in the world still under bondage and still struggling to attain its freedom. To-day, all figures and statistics prove that India is the poorest and the most backward of modern countries, its ancient industries ruined, its ancient population wiped out its ancient glory, wealth no more, going down and down every year so that unless this disastrous downward course is prevented in time, perhaps the country may be effaced from the map of the world.

Turn to the real study of Indian economy and particularly after the British rule, and you will discover the real causes for the tragic change of this pathetic transformation from one extreme to another.—Read Romeshchandra Dutt, study the facts and figures of Dadabhoy Naoroji and even recent works of eminent economists on the question, and be convinced that this great fall from the top to nearly the bottom is due to one principal cause, the continued, never-ending, ever-increasing financial drain under the foreign rule. That is the proper study for you, a study which you will not find in your schools and colleges, but which you will have to supplement from outside.

"Youngmen and women, I call upon you to take the vow in your minds. "I will not rest. I will not rest till the freedom of my country has been achieved. I will not rest until unemployment and poverty have become things of the past. I will not rest until the masses, the peasants and workers have come to their own."

"Prepare yourselves for the struggle. Cultivate those moral, mental and spiritual qualities which non-violent soldiers need for encountering the imperialistic arguments of batons, bullets and bayonets. The memories of the past, the needs of the present and the hopes of the future will invigorate you. Prove yourselves worthy of the cause. Acquit yourselves like men."

Sarat Chandra Bose.



## V

### Mr. SARAT CHANDRA BOSE

\* Comrades! the problems which confront us to-day and demand solution at our hands are so many and so varied in their character that it would be idle to attempt to deal with them in the course of a short address. I shall not therefore deal with the perennial problems of poverty, pestilence and ignorance problems which can only be solved when we have a national government of our own. I shall have to pick and choose. I propose to confine myself to some of the urgent problems of the day—problems, no doubt, of an all India character but also in a manner peculiar to our Province which seem to baffle attempts to solve them. The corybantic attempts of the departments of an alien Government fail to solve them because they lack sympathy. But I do not despair. I have faith in Bengal's nationalism which has successfully weathered many a passing squall. Indeed, as I look upon this gathering of our youngmen and women—the custodians of Bengal's nationalism and the inheritors of great traditions, I feel that the future is already lit up with the radiance of a beautiful dawn.

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\*Mr. Sarat Chandra Bose's Presidential address at the All Bengal Students Conference held at Calcutta on 12th Oct. 1936.

Thirty years' back when our predecessors in public-service engaged themselves in a struggle to unsettle the settled fact of partition of our Province—Lala Lajpat Rai congratulated them on their work and "on the splendid opportunity which an all-wise-Providence in misdispensation, has offered the Bengalees by heralding the dawn of a new political era for this country". Thirty years have rolled by eventful years of toil and suffering and, let me add, achievement also; for, the sufferings of our youngmen and young women—brave soldiers in the fight for freedom—cannot go in vain. Though the forces of reaction and repression have gathered strength, I know how feeble in physical, compared with moral power and how fleshy arms and the instruments of war are but a fragile tenure, and "Soon to nothing brought" when opposed to the will of an enlightened people. With that robust optimism which is born of suffering and is nurtured by faith in the moral governance of things we cannot but feel that—

"While the tried waves vanily breaking,  
Seem have no painful inch to gain,  
Far back, through creek and inlets making,  
Comes silent, flooding in the main."

My faith in Bengal's nationalism is born of faith in Bengal's youth. Our sicknesses, social and political, cannot be cured by sighs and laments, they can only be cured by those who are young and courageous. As a great Chinaman, Chen Tu Seu, Dean of the National

University of Peking said in "My Solemn Appeal to Youth"—"We must have youth if we are to survive, we must have youth if we are to get rid of corruption. Herein lies the only hope for our society!" It is for the youth of a country to preach, to combat, to act. It is for them to discover, to create and to lead.

With so many of our youngmen and women deprived of their liberty without even the formality of a trial, how can we possibly forget that the repressive laws are there? It has been my privilege to know some of them and for obvious reasons I speak with reserve. I know that many of them have taken their unmerited detention in that spirit which found expression in the memorable utterance of Lokmanya Balagangadhar Tilak—"There are higher powers that rule the destiny of things, and it may be the will of providence that the cause which I represent may prosper more by my suffering than by my remaining free." Their sufferings have been beyond expression; but let us hope that they have been to them their initiation in the worship of freedom. These repressive laws—"Lawless laws" in the language of the late Dr. Rash Behary Ghose—are only reminiscent of our present political condition, we cannot possibly acquiesce in them for we believe with Prof. Harold J. Laski that "executive justice, in fact, is simply an euphemism for the denial of justice" and that: "the secret of liberty is always in the end, the courage to resist." We have no resists them and to go on resisting them until we have

succeeded in re-establishing in the Government of our country the "elementary principle of panel psychology—that you cannot make a crime of conduct which people do not 'a priori' regard as criminal." (to quote Prof. Laski again.)

We in Bengal cannot overlook—far less ignore—the mischievous effect of the communal decision of British Imperialists which is calculated to divide the nation vertically as well as horizontally. That British politicians were and are fully aware of the harmful consequences of communal electorates is apparent from the following remarks made in the report of the Indian Constitutional Reforms (1918). "Division by creeds and classes means the creation of political camps organised against each other, and teaches men to think as partisans and not as citizens, and it is difficult to see how the change from this system to national representation is ever to occur."

The signatories to the Report openly acknowledged that if those divisions were perpetuated the British Government would "find it difficult to meet the charge of being hypocritical or short-sighted." When with full consciousness of the result of such action a British Imperialist considers the change of hypocrisy as dust in the balance in which they weigh their own imperialistic interests. I feel happy that the Working Committee of the Indian National Congress has given up the attitude of non-acceptance and non-rejection" of the communal decision and has

Bengal which has preached the gospel of nationalism in India and suffered for it, cannot for a moment acquiesce in a decision, which is anti-national and anti-democratic and which is calculated to strike us down in our fight for freedom and to extend the life of Imperialistic domination. To acquiesce in it would amount to acquiescing in Imperialistic domination. As John Stuart Mill said several decades ago "one people may keep another for its own use, a place to make money in human cattle farm for the profits of its own inhabitants" but "such a thing as Government of one people by another does not and cannot exist" Will you be instrumental in perpetuating something which has no legal or moral right to exist? I can read your answer in your faces and in your cheers.

Our agitation against this communal decision cannot but be successful. Already we have the assurance of the Punjab and Maharashtra to stand by us, and I am sure as was the case with the Anti partition Agitation—the movement started in Bengal would move on from town to town and from province to province assuming at last on all-India character and gathering a force which no one would dare resist. I appeal to you, young men of Bengal, to come forward and take your legitimate and proud place in our march against this latest manifestation of British Imperialism.

The question of unemployment looms large on our horizon. I cannot but point out the indifference

with which this serious problem has so long been regarded by the Government. The tocsin of alarm was sounded by Sir Valentire Chiol more than twenty five years back when he wrote, . . .

"Whilst the skilled artisan, and even the unskilled labourer, can often command from 12 annas to one rupee a day, the youth who has sweated himself and family through the whole course of higher education frequently look in vain for employment at Rs. 30, or even Rs. 20, a month. A Hindu gentleman who is one of the highest authorities on education told me that in Bengal where the evil has reached the most serious dimension, he estimated the number of those unemployed at over 40,000."

How the number has swelled during the last twenty-five years we can easily imagine. But still the Government of India decline to ascertain the number of the unemployed. Are the Government unaware of the dangers of the situation created by unemployment? Most decidedly not. Speaking at Chittagong in 1932, Sir John Anderson—the sands of whose official life as Governor of Bengal are fast running out, said, "Year after year our young men are growing up,—aye, and our girls too—to find no outlet for their energies." Nor is educated unemployment the only unemployment which has already assumed alarming proportions. Unemployment is just as acute among the educated, as substantial in rural areas in urban. But what has Government done up-till-now to solve this.

problem ?

We are all aware of the attempts that have been, and are being made in other countries and they are self-governing to solve it. As the presidium of the State Planning Commission, sixteen men in Moscow were appointed to lay down the industrial future of 14 crores and 60 lakhs people and one-sixth of land area of the world. That was Russia's experiment to solve the problem, an experiment immense, novel and courageous. America embarked upon a colossal prosperity plan in 1934 with public works costing 105 thousand million dollars to give effect to schemes to cultivate five million acres of new land every year for fifteen years, to enlarge the state forests and parks, to promote the mineral resources etc. With a view to give work to every able-bodied man, the same year France launched its five-year plan for public works with a sanction [of £ 12 crores to find work for 2 lakhs of men in the first year and for 4 lakhs later. The bold measures adopted by France for unemployment relief would be apparent from the decision of the French Cabinet in 1931 to cut down foregin labour because 3 lakhs and 50 hundred French people were out of work while 8 hundred foreigners were in employment. I have not the time to take you through the attempts made by other countries to relieve unemployment. But I cannot omit reference to what England herself has done in performance of her national duty and obligation. Only last year Mr. Llyod George gave some

astounding figures. He said that since the world war the British Government had spent over a lakh crores of pounds on the unemployed. Here the Government have done practically nothing for the unemployed. You must have seen in the papers how the output of the factories to be established by the 58 detenus recently released has been sold and paid in advance. This must serve as an eye opener to the possibilities which the Government of Bengal had not utilised all these years through neglect or indifference. The sufferings of the employed—educated and uneducated—have been simply appalling. The unemployed has been living a life of chronic starvation, without changes, without pause, and without hope.

"The emptiness of ages in his face." And on his back the burden of the world.

This brings me to the main question before us—the question of achieving national independence. It was Marx who said with prophetic inspiration and precision—"Do not be led away by the idea of improving material conditions without first solving the national question. You cannot do it."

The new constitution which is being ushered in is inconsistent with national independence and the principles of democracy. It gives little or no power to the people of India. The Indian national Congress has rejected it, and in order to demonstrate your confidence in your great national institution it is



your duty to see that only those who conform to the Congress policy and programme are returned to the new legislatures. We are entering into a phase in our struggle for political emancipation. The Congress movement with its creed of non-violence has been going on for years now and it has brought about a welcome change in our ideas and methods. "It is for you, young men of Bengal, to help it on to success. You know what equipments are required for it. Prepare yourselves for the struggle. Cultivate those moral, mental and spiritual qualities which non-violent soldiers need for encountering the Imperialistic arguments of batons, bullets and bayonets. The memories of the past, the needs of the present and the hopes of the future will invigorate you. Prove yourselves worthy of the cause. Acquit yourselves like men."

(2)

I respect and love youth for this active principle, which is inherent in its very nature. I respect and love it for three things ; its idealism, its courage and its unconquerable urge towards finding an outlet for idealism in action. As a matter of fact I look upon this last as the most priceless gift of youth, for without the impulse to translate ideas into action, all the simmering intellectual and moral life of youth,

all its treasures of faith and hope would be condemned to mere idle day-dreaming.

In speaking of the idealism of youth, I make a distinction between having vision and being a visionary, and to my mind the distinction is fundamental. Vision enables us to rise above the distractions and irrelevancies of immediate circumstances and keep our hold on essentials, while a visionary, by divorcing his ideals from reality, has foredoomed himself to a barren career. Idealists shout that they have no mooring in the work-a-day world or so feeble that they dare not take up the challenge of reactionary forces, are of no value in the onward march of humanity. They only help weak individuals to fly from reality and weave about themselves unsubstantial reveries of wish-fulfilment. It has given me a deep pain to observe the signs of this morbidity in certain sections of the youth of India. I appeal to the youth of India to welcome toil as the hero's portion in life and become workers in the noblest and widest sense of the word. In this conference, however, I am glad to be able to say, I find no ground for misgiving. There is no sign among you of enfeebled purpose, wavering faith or waning enthusiasm.

The list of the great considerations which await solution at our hands is the realisation of the essential unity of India on a sound basis or of defending her against foreign aggression, our schemes are sure to break the bounds of provincial demarcations till they

embrace the entire region marked off from the rest of the world by the great mountain barriers on the north and the seas on the other sides.

The diversities in Indian life are not the result of self-conscious effort, they have not yet hardened as in Europe into regional nationalism; they really spring from uneven evolution due to the immense area of the country and difficulties of communication in the past. Their natural trend is, therefore, towards coalescence and unification. It is my belief that this trend will be strengthened by the industrialisation of India which is inevitable. Modern industrial technique required for its profitable employment has a large area and ample resources in raw material. Soviet Russia and the United States of America are striking examples of the truth of this assertion. India offers industrialism a field comparable in many respects to Russia and the United States, and I have already told you that sooner or later industrialism is bound to come to us and upon us. This to my thinking will have a decisive effect on the problem of Indian unity. The industrial revolution will pass over India like a steam-roller flattening out all the petty diversities which at this hour cling to their separate existences and impede the full growth of Indian nation.

The desire for unity is not a new yearning in India nor the process of unification a recent growth. The one came into being and the other began long before the times for which we have epigraphic records. Both

are symbolised in the great Aswamedha sacrifices enjoined in the Vedas. The process of unification continued through many vicissitudes. At times the forces of disruption secured a passing triumph but again the cohesive forces asserted themselves. In the sum-total, however, there has been no putting back of the clock but always a steady gain and to this gain both the foreigner and the Guptas, the Rajputs, the Turks, the Moghuls, and the British, have all contributed. But strange as it seems, it is during British rule, when the process of unification appeared to reach its final consummation that the whole movement was suddenly and abnormally arrested. India is divided to-day into two arbitrary parts—an Indian India and a British India. An absolute power with all the forces at its command has not only created the arbitrary division but also professes to guarantee the unnatural status quo.

If there are any positive political forces working in India to-day, they are two, first, the determination to win freedom for every Indian wherever he lives, and secondly the yearning for the coalescence of peoples who speak the same language and share the same culture. But neither the British Government nor seemingly the states, seem to be aware of the strength of these forces. If they did, they would not have proposed a Federal Constitution which violates the fundamental assumption of federalism by seeking to make federal components of units which, in the

first place, have no natural existence as separate entities and secondly, are not uniform in their internal political development and organisation.

I am, of course, aware that the theorists of the proposed Indian Federation argue the Federation merely connotes a special form of organisation among various component units and should in no wise be confounded with the nature of their internal government. This, however, is a refinement of illogicality which will convince no one. The theories of the Divine Right of Princes and of the sovereignty of the people will simply not live in amity side by side in India, as they have not lived anywhere in the world. The desire for freedom has a self-propagating energy which recognises no artificial barriers. This is a fact which every one in India should do well to bear in mind.

The extension of popular government in the states is likely to have a profound effect on the character of the Indian Federation. Speaking of the probable consequences of the establishment of the democratic institutions in the states, an Indian Prince says, one possible result of that eventuality will be "a movement among the different states for geographical

might take. The situation in India will be much easier than what it was in Italy. The politicalties and bonds, which will grow with the inauguration of the All-India Federation, and the great nationalistic ideals are bound to carry the people by storm. Moreover, it must be admitted that only a very small percentage of the states can claim a great historical past and real political and cultural unity which could save them from being amalgamated with others. The utter failure of the Princes to create local patriotism by means of political histories of their states and their dynasties is bound to react on the future. The All-India outlook of the states' subjects is growing and is definitely displacing all thoughts and ideas of their loyalty to their rulers and more so the political organisation or unit, which has existed for no more than a couple of centuries. The All-India ideals are sure to be encouraged by economic pressure which will increase with the establishment of the Federation. The development of such an extreme situation is not likely to arise within a century or so, and much depends on other political events in India and also on the policy the Princes will follow in respect to their subjects. But whenever this position will arise, the barriers which mark out the boundaries of the various small states will break down and the people of these states will combine to create a great and powerful state."

I fully agree with this Prince in his clear-sighted

anticipation of the future, but I do not think the final denouncement of which he speaks is as far away as he conjectures. In my view, the union will come in our time. I believe the future and real Federation of India will come in' being through the extension of the principle of provincial redistribution already enunciated and adopted by the Indian National Congress ; and it will be on the lines of the union of Socialist Soviet Republics. The great Hindi-speaking bloc of Hindustan will be its core in the same fashion as the R. S F. S. R. and its periphery will be formed by the voluntary co-operation of units speaking the other major languages. This will give full scope to the longing for unity and autonomy at the same time which forms the warp and weft of the political aspirations of modern Indians.

The second great consideration is that of the removal of the appalling poverty of the masses of India. The Indian worker and the Indian peasant live a life bereft not only of the refinements of civilisation but even of the means of bare physical sustenance. There is an influential and imposing body of thought which holds the emphatic view that poverty will never be eliminated from human society without the elimination also of capitalism and the classes. Somehow or other, my mind has always shrunk from historical determinism of this kind. I am myself a believer in socialism, although I am afraid after the confession of my doubts about the inevit-

ability of class-war. My socialism will be labelled as of a very pink brand by those who flaunt its banner of flaming scarlet. Yet, I would repeat, I am a sincere socialist. If, nevertheless, I have not been able to accept the theory of class-war in its entirety, it is because of a belief that it does not reveal the whole truth of human revolution. Investigation has shown that Nature is not as cruel as she was supposed to be, that there is an unreasoning animal behaviour as much play of the social and altruistic impulse as of stark egotism. Marx could not and did not take full account of this fact. Although it is no reflection upon his genius that he was unable to anticipate coming discoveries, this is a flaw in his argument which cannot be denied.

To the Indian mind, the theory of class-war does not appeal, and this is not due entirely to religious belief, contemptuously termed by Marx the narcotic of peoples. The entire course of Indian history and the unfolding of Indian civilization has been dominated by the spirit of toleration. This induced us in the past, to seek the reconciliation of jarring elements by love and toleration and the same process of harmonisation and co-ordination by which life reconciles all the bewildering varieties of its manifestations on earth. Some of this spirit of synthesis still lingers in us. That is why many Indians, true to the heritage of our ancient civilisation and to the ethics of our national life, recoil instinctively



before the notion of class-conflict.

There is one peculiar feature in the Indian situation which makes me anticipate the bloodless introduction of socialism in India and, with it, the peaceful redistribution of material goods among all classes of Indians. That peculiar feature is the want of grill in the privileged classes in India. I do not believe that these classes in our country will ever be capable of organising themselves into Fascists and Nazis in the manner of Western bourgeoisie or offer the same frenzied and dour resistance. Those in India who are now seemingly opposed to the larger economic interests of the masses are a weary and enfeebled class. They approximate more to the emigre type, who, if they would cling to their past rights, would not make such of an effort to defend them from others. This is a consideration which holds out some sort of a consoling hope that India at any rate will be spared the painful spectacle of seeing her sons face one another in serried ranks of organised and implacable hatred.

At all events, there is a good deal that we can do before class-conflict comes to India, on the assumption that it is inevitable. India's potential resources for supporting her people have not yet been tapped and worked to a title of their capacity. We, therefore, shall have to be betraying the interests of the masses if we decide for the present to work within the framework of the existing social order to develop industry

and improve agriculture. Perhaps, the full-fledged believer in class-conflict will argue that this is no better than a reformist's palliative, and that his is the better path. Against that I shall set the old saying—a saying such admitted by practical men—that the 'better' is the enemy of the 'good'.

I now come to the problem of securing complete independence for India or, Purna Swaraj as it has been called. The Indian National Congress has been striving for this end for more than fifty years. It is my belief that with the Indian National Congress in actual power in all but two provinces of India we have reached a very important milestone in our onward march. In every province in which the Congress is in power, it has been decisively shown that while the Congress could not shrink from the task of Government and would welcome it as an opportunity for bringing about a reconstruction of our national life, it would never tolerate compromise on the issue of independence and national dignity. By doing so, the Congress has proclaimed that office for its own sake possesses no lure for it. Our ultimate success in securing untrammelled power in the provinces of British India is almost assured. We have now to carry the flight of stage further and establish the power of the Congress and with it of the popular will in field when they do not yet exercise an effective voice. These fields are mainly two, Central Government and the Indian States. So far as Central Government is con-

cerned, the necessary prelude to an extension of democratic principles to that sphere is resistance to the Federal Scheme as it has been drawn up and enacted. At the centre, the Government of India Act 1935 bans for all time not solely the control but the participation even of the Indian people in defence and external affairs. This is a denial of the birth-right of a nation in which no Indian with any self-respect, whatever the shade of his political opinion can for a moment acquiesce. No Indian, unless he is a false to his country and to his own sense of self-respect, can even discuss the Federal Scheme until these and other objectionable features, are totally removed. I say this with all the emphasis at my command because there has been some underground mutterings of late that, after some minor modification have been made, the Indian National Congress is likely to accept the Federal Scheme.

Coming now to the question of the Indian States, I would reiterate my belief that the introduction of the democratic form of government in them is inevitable sooner or later. We feel that the freedom movement is likely to be more spontaneous and have a broader basis if it draws its main strength from the people of the states. It is of course unnecessary to add that the Congress organisation in British India would welcome organisation and activities analogous to its own in the states. But it desires at the same time to have them as equals and allies, strengthen.

one another rather than as mere links in its chain.

The immense hold of the Congress on the people of British India springs from its boundless potentialities for growth and expansion. Dynamic adaptability has ever been the outstanding quality of its outlook and principle. As the years have brought in the leaven of new ideas, it has given proof of its capacity for organic growth by responding to these influences. As time marches the Congress will march too. I invite you and through you the entire youth in India to join this onward march.

I appeal to the youth of India to be up and doing to hold themselves in readiness, to stand at arms, so to say, for another reason also. The acquiescence of France and Great Britain has not placated Hitler, nor is there any reason to believe that Mussoline has abandoned his Roman ambitions. If anything, the Governments and the people of the two democratic powers seem to be more determined than ever that their rearmament should be carried to the furthest limit and that there shall be no relaxation of the air-raid precautions. This has only one meaning, that the clash is postponed not averted.

This clash, when it comes, can have one or two results, and no other. Either the Fascist powers will win the Great Britain and France shrink into minor powers, or there will be an end for ever of totalitarianism on earth following a victory of democracy and liberty. In the latter event, the nominal victors will,

by the stupendous task that faces him. Men die of hunger, and we say it is due to over-production. They suffer from privation; and origin of kingship or, in the name of "law and order" (which is "their law" and "their order") demand "hands off the ark of their covenant." Is social peace at the mercy of reckless gamblers in state craft, which is enphemistically called "statesmanship"?

The whole world is in a melting pot. Europe is tottering. America is confused and confounded. Britain is gasping for breath. Is it a case of the old order changing yielding place to the new? Or we notice the panges of the birth of a new civilization? In the vast and rapid changes that are taking place in the world around us, India must play her part. And when I think of India my first thought goes to the youth of land we live in. In my speech at the All Bengal's Students Conference at Calcutta on the 12th Oct. last, I said, "My faith in Bengal's notionalism is born of my faith in Bengal's Youth. Our sickness, social and political, cannot be cured by sighs and laments, they can only be cured by those who are young and courageous. It is for the youth of a country to preach, to combat, to act. It is for them to discover, to create and to lead."

Yes, it is you young men and women, who can discover, for discoverers must be as tall as Gulliver while old man like myself bent down by the cares and anxieties which age carries with it, are so many Lilli-

puts. It is you who can create, because courage to destroy all that is evil must necessarily precede the will and the imagination to build. It is you again who can lead, for leadership requires idealistic enthusiasm and that reckless abandon, of which youth alone are capable.

In a book which I was recently going through, the author—a Chinese doctor has stated that not only has the ancient civilization of the East been undergoing rejuvenation at the hands of the youth, but also that all that there is of Western civilization in China has been put under critical re-examination. A new calculus of gain and loss has been introduced. New tests are being applied in the fields of religion, of culture, of Philosophy, of industry, of Government and, in fact, of all that in one word we call "civilization." The Bolshevistic movement, the "Red Gold" of Moscow is now a familiar red-rag was essentially an economic and political movement. We are told by the same Chinese author that the Chinese youth movement which is broadening from precedent to precedent is fundamentally cultural. I look to the youth of my country to evolve a movement, essentially political and economic, but at the same time, social and cultural. Do the youth of India suffer from weariness of the flesh? Do they also suffer from littleness of spirit? It is for you to answer. Much have we heard in these days of youth being poisoned by politics and politics being desecrated by

youth. In despair, once a politician told us that "a subject nation had no politics." He had his answer when an elder statesman said that "Politics was breath of his nostrils" what then is politics? Man had once been defined as an animal who reasons vanquished though that is, he argues still. That definition, like the Montagu Chelmsford act, now under orders of liquidation, was disappointing, inadequate and unsatisfactory.

He then came to be defined as a biped we laugh. That definition was laughed out. A Greek thinker arose and said that man was a political animal. Men and supermen have not since challenged it. We cannot think of organised life without politics, which includes the making of law, the administration of social and economic justices, the defence of hearth and homes, harnessing of natural resources to social use, the distribution of the members of the community and so on and so forth. Politics clings to us even if we try to shun it. We are all born "Politics." The press and the public under misapprehension and by usage discriminate between men and men and call some of them politicians, those that are elect statesmen and the rest of the species men. It is a kind of wrongful discrimination to which we have long been accustomed and which, as far as I could gather, has not been sought to be prevented by adequate and effective provisions in the new Government of India Act! Indeed we are all politicians, young

and old, men and women, the temple going Hindu and the mosque loving Mussalman, the vapid communalist and the fervid nationalist, the state proof individualist and the stateless internationalist.

The young are more political than the old, because they have greater fervour, greater imagination, and greater determination. How can politics be banned from schools and colleges when it admits of no banishment? In college rooms and lecture halls you discuss the divine right of Kings but evolve the historical conception of the state. You take up green and fling into the teeth of your stronger rival, the green philosophy that will and not force is the basis of the state. You learn that the king can do no wrong, and yet you know that some kings were deposed and some others cruelly disposed of. You are taught that the Royal Veto of Parliamentary legislation is as dead as Queen Anne, or, in the language of the butcher, as dead as mutton. All this is politics, but whether of the right type or of the wrong type it is not for me to discuss to-day.

I have already told you, my young friends, that your movement must be political, economic, social, and cultural. I need not remind you that literature plays a large part in moulding the minds of civilised men, and to the extent the literature is banned, proscribed or prohibited, to that extent your minds are starved. You must have heard of a measure called the Sea Customs Act. That act has not spared a world-figure like



Dr Rabindra Nath Tagore, not to speak of the lesser men. Many books which are printed, published and circulated in various parts of the world are prohibited entry into this country and perhaps the ground for such prohibition is that coloured men see 'red' in all that is in black print. You are also aware that the different local Government periodically issue a list of books, pamphlets and documents which they have proscribed. In law they are forfeited to his His Majesty when seized. You must not suppose that they add to His Majesty's property or enrich His Majesty's collection. Where they go and how they are disposed of we are not in a position to say. Nor are we permitted to examine the grounds upon which literature is prohibited under the Sea Customs Act or proscribed by the orders of the local Government. The decision lies with men who are not responsible to your country men. In my province a law was passed in 1932 which has been corrected, up to 1934—and what a word correction! I would ask A. P. Herbert to include 'correction' in his examples of the abuse of terms in his new edition of "What A Word". Under the Law, if you are found in possession of a prohibited or a proscribed document you may be sentenced to three years' imprisonment or fine or both. This is not all. There is another section in the act which lays down that if you are found in possession of literature which in the act which lays down that if you are found in possession of literature which in the opinion

of a trial Magistrate, is of an objectionable nature, you are liable to a like penalty. In recent months there have been a large number of prosecutions under this act. What does this Act do? It gives the police power (whether they mean to exercise it or not is different matter) to prosecute you even for possession of the song celestial, the sacred Koran and the Holy Bible; for, cannot certain passages or words used in those holy texts be construed an encouraging the commission of offence contemplated in the Act? It is difficult even for lawyers to realise where the mischief of the Act begins and where it ends. The Act is an attempt at cultural starvation; and it is for you to devise ways and means to prevent cultural and spiritual starvation of the nation. Of the new Government of India Act, which I shall describe as the "British Chapter of India bondage", I need not say much. All that need be said is that it is an imposition in more than one sense. It is a constitution of pure British-make which concedes to you some little freedom in non-essentials but not in essentials. It is an Act which the Congress students pledged to reject, and in that matter, we require the active co-operation as well as the moral support of the young men and woman of the country. I do not believe in a constitution, whatever might be its merits and in this case the merits are infinitesimal—which has been imposed on us from outside and has not been framed by the children of the soil. The

fact that it has been imported from outside by itself constitutes a sufficient condemnation of it.

It is about to be inaugurated in the provinces with the promise of a hybrid structure at what has been termed the Federal centre. We reject the constitution, and alongwith it, we condemn and reject the communal decision of the British Government. You know that we have at last succeeded in evolving a formula, thanks to the efforts of Pandit Jawaharlal Nahru and of Bengal Congress men and Nationalists which has been favourably received by Congress men and Nationalists all over the country. The charge can no longer be laid at the door of the Congress that it has acquiesced in the communal and undemocratic and which strikes at the roots of national unity. But as you know, we congress men, will fight and combat it not because it gives a few seats more to Mussalmans and a few seats less to Hindus or Sikhs but because it denies justice to all communities inhabiting this country and is calculated to divide and disrupt the Indian nation and foster the growth of fissiparous tendencies and separatist mentality. We must end it and substitute in its place a scheme based upon an agreed formula among the communities concerned. In this our fight against the new constitution, and the communal decision, which I regard as its foundation stone, we call you, young men and woman to our aid. We call you to our aid because we feel that it is the youth who are non-

communal in their outlook, who have no personal interests to serve, no schemes of exploitation to promote and no private ambitions to satisfy, who can meet together in a spirit of detachment and bring to bear upon the solution of this difficult and delicate problem, an outlook untainted by personal or communal prejudices. My young friends, you would no doubt like to hear of your brothers and sisters kept in indefinite detention without any apparent charge and without any trial. I myself was one of the victims for about three years and a half of an ancient law originally designed for the reclamation of the ancient houses in Indian India. What shall I tell you about those still in detention? They constitute the flower of Bengal's youth, men and women strong in mind and bold in spirit and pledged, as we believe, to the creed of non-violence in this perverse world where in the last analysis appeal is made to force rather than to reason. Their careers are ruined, and Government talk of "recovery" by Industrial Schemes, agricultural planning and so on. A batch of 57 detainees (out of more than 2,000 in detention) has been released under this recovery plan. But the Ganges is not on fire. Where is the change? Where is even the whisper of an aimed revolt or of a terrorist plot?

There is, and can be no peace in Bengal homes or in Indian homes until they are released. How can there be peace to a mother who has nothing but a helpless fear

for her beloved son confined in a distant detention camp or a prison cell? How can there be peace for a newly wedded wife from whose side her loving partner has been snatched away? It is no use crying "Peace, Peace!" when there can be no peace.

What are the crimes of which these men and women are guilty? The public do not know, the victims themselves are in the dark; no light is vouchsafed to them. It is all a "Secret" mystery. Harold Larwood, who has arrived to teach you cricket, would perhaps exonerate himself of all the charges against him and cite when he returns home, detention without trial as being that art of bowling in which the bowler hits the batsman rather than the bat or the wicket. Sir Stanley Jackson, once a Governor and always a cricketer frankly admitted it was a heavy roller used to set the pitch to order under sunshine. A heavy roller indeed it is; but there is no sunshine. The wicket does not yield to the heavy pressure of a roller.

In a statement laid on the table in the Bengal Council, the Home member said the other day that there had so far been five cases of suicide by detainees. The details are not available. Light is detrimental to public interest in an age of darkness. A letter released from the Deolali Detention camp is, however, revealing. The young and unfortunate boy hanged himself as a result of acute mental depression. In another case the letters reported to have been left be-

hind by a detinue before his death have been withheld from his parents.

Suicide is not a pleasing pastime, nor a delightful art; living animals prize life above everything else. Have the authorities ever pondered over the terrible consequences on the mind of indefinite restraint of personal freedom. A murderer not condemned to death knows when he will be "restored" to his home and things that are homely. A youngman, or woman detained under the Criminal Law Amendment Act or Regulation III for offences neither known or determined can only repeat Prometheuslike "no change; no pause, no hope Yet I endure."

No wonder that brave men driven as they are to desperate folly out of a sense of insufferable helplessness sometimes go the length of defying the law and the law-giver by seeking to release the unbending spirit from the flesh in bondage. It is an inevitable psychological malady and we of flesh and blood feel helpless and cry out in sorrow and in agony. My young friends, there are many other problems, I would like to discuss with you; but, unfortunately, within the short space of time allotted to me, it is not possible for me to do so. I would, however, draw your attention to what is going on the world around us, and particularly, to the coming proletarian revolution. The word "Revolution" does not and can not frighten me; nor should it frighten you. What is coming, was prophetic intution. In the year 1896

He said to a disciple of his, Sister Christine of America! "Europe is on the edge of a volcano. If the fire is not extinguished by a flood of spirituality, it will erupt". He then proceeded! "The next upheaval that is to usher in another era will come from Russia or from China. I cannot see clearly which, but it will be either the one or the other. The world is in the third epoch under the domination of Vaishya (the merchant, the third estate). The fourth epoch will be under that of Sudra (the proletariat)". Can you, my young friends think of any other striking instance of prophetic intuition which can compare with this? The world is moving and moving with great speed. Social and economic revolution has almost come upon us. Taking world conditions as they are today, Social and economic readjustment—call it revolution if you will deem to be necessary, almost inevitable. But I desire to warn you, my young friends, that when it comes it will demand and exact terrible sacrifices from you. Social and economic revolution—call it revolution in Russia has been effected in sorrow and in blood. Let me hope and pray that here in India, it will be effected in joy and in peace.

That leads me to the question as to your duties and responsibilities towards the workers and peasants of your country. It is your duty to see that the activities of the intellectuals are linked up with those of the proletarian workers. In the words of M. Romain Rolland, I would say to you, "The

tuals ought to light up the road that the proletarian workers have to build." That leads me to the question as to what attitude the youth of the country should take with regard to future "Imperialist wars." It is hardly necessary to affirm because it is established already that imperialist war is a necessary consequence—one may go further and see a condition of the capitalist system which still is no doubt breaking down, but it will not break down completely without a final conflict between the capitalists on the one hand, the workers and peasants on the other. It is your duty to stand by and with the masses in the conflict that is to come; for, it is they who constitute the people and they must live and live at any cost. This question has been agitating the minds of the students of the old English Universities such as Oxford and Cambridge. I remember reading during my detention the report of a debate of the Oxford University Union, which resulted in the passing of a resolution that the youth there would refuse to take part in wars in future—a resolution which created considerable amount of consternation at the time. Your duty is clear. You have to stand by the many and not by the interested few, the capitalists.

Young men and women, I call upon you to take the vow in your minds. "I will not rest. I will not rest until the freedom of my country has been achieved. I will not rest until unemployment and poverty have become things of the past. I will not



rest until the masses—the peasants and workers—have come to their own".

(4)

I have been summoned here to open this conference. I do so with the greatest readiness and enthusiasm, but I am not assumed to confess that I do it feeling all the time like the fifth wheel of a coach, whose utility is "nil" and decorative value questionable.

In my young days and even down to more recent times, one President and one chairman of the reception committee were considered evils enough connected with a conference. It was as much as one could do to rope in one lion to act as President. The bunt has certainly not become easier or late. Why then duplicate your worries by adding a second figure head? It may be the introduction of co-education has given you new powers of persuasion, which are particularly effective in extorting "Charth" from people who are not given to frittering away their bank balances in the form of subscriptions. But in peace as in war, the defensive soon overtakes the offensive, so that in the end we stand where we always did. In fact, from what I have seen and heard

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\*The fourth Session of the All India Students Conference commenced in Calcutta on the 1st January 1939. Sj. Sarat Chandra Bose, leader of the Bengal Congress Party, in opening the conference said:—

it deems in the President heart, the experiences of my young comrades who have organised this conference have not been less exasperating than they were expected to be. Therefore, my advice to you is :—

"Always shun and shed unnecessary appendages. Be simple, be simpler and be more simple still. Missing and biting a series of disillusioned oldish celebrities and pseudo-celebrities is not as exhilarating a game as missing and biting cricket, football and tennis balls. Leave old men to their unimaginative ways. Act up the secret conviction of youth that they are a lot of useless fogey. I know what your candid views are, you say among yourselves that their insides are always as bald as their pates sometimes are. So, do not pretend to seek inspiration from them, but pursue your own headlong course. If that leads you to wisdom so much the better; if that leads you to mistakes even that not bad as it might seem, but do not, if you prize the spring time of your life, stand waiting for limping mentors which would have your sparkle and a fire sick-tied over with the pale cast of thought."

"I find I am lapsing into the incorrigible weakness of age, which is to preach at youth. Before coming down to this conference, I have decided that I should leave this as the sole privilege of your distinguished President. But it is difficult for a man of my age to see so many young faces before him and check the flow of didacticism. A wise, if cynical, sphosist has

said that men give nothing more liberally than advice. This is true still of the relations between old and young people: for, there is nothing old men desire more ardently than that the coming generation should be made in their own image. Youth, on the contrary, would not be youth if it did not rise as one man against this imposition. So the sons rule the fathers against the grain and do things which set the latter's teeth on edge. One winter morning they sleep under the coverlet when the senior rush to the "Maodan" in virtuous and voluntary search, as they pretend, of physical fitness but in reality goaded by the tortures of insomnia. They romp and rush without fear for their hearts and blood-vessels. They smile at and are smiled at by young beauties with as little danger to their hearts and blood vessels in the figurative sense. All this sets up a tension—a real tension, invisible and unconfessed though it might be—between age and youth. I believe there are many fiery communists among my young friends here. Have they ever given thought to this aspect of the inevitable class struggle? On the assumption that they have, I would humbly inquire how they purpose to go about to create a classless society in this respect? Perhaps I could help them with a suggestion. As a lawyer believing in precedents, I would put before them the example of certain primitive tribes whose young men spear their parents to death as soon as they have reached man's estate.

My young communist friends are firm believers in a drastic resolution of the class struggle. So the idea of putting an end to the eternal dialectic between youth and age in this manner might not be unwelcome to them, on the contrary, if you are to believe Plato, Democracy proceeds on a subtler plan. It demoralises the old men. Let me quote the actual words of the great philosopher. As a consequence of democratic liberty, Plato says, "The father accustoms himself to become like his child and to fear his sons and the son in his desire for freedom becomes belike father and has no fear or reverence for his parent—The school-master fears and flatters his pupils and the pupils despise both their school-masters and their tutors. And altogether, the young act like their seniors and complete with them in speech and in action, while the old men condescend to the young and become triumph of versatility and wit, imitating their juniors in order to avoid the appearance of being sunk or despotic!" You thus have two alternative methods dealings with your elders—the communistic and the democratic, which of them you will choose will depend entirely on whether you have faith or have no faith in the Principle of "Ahimsa". As for as, the choice will make no difference whatever in substance. Either we are put up against the wall and face the firing squad or we march chained to the wheels of your triumphal chariot,

But is there really no third way—which is neither

destruction nor corruption—for reconciling not only the antithesis between youth and age but every species of difference in outlook? The modern world has come dangerously near to believing that there is not. Servitude and intolerance are spreading at an appalling rate among us. Europe which from the end of the 18th century made a goddess of liberty, is recanting her faith. How far this recantation has gone will become disconcertingly plain if we take the example not of Germany or Italy where free institutions had never taken deep root, but of England herself, whose boast used to be that she was the "Mother of Parliaments". I have been looking through a recently published book written by an Englishman, whose theme is that Parliamentary Democracy must be thrown overboard in order to enable Great Britain to live in peace with the totalitarian regimes. "Attachment to Parliamentary Democracy," this writer says,—"threatens us with economic disaster and prevents our sound defence against Military defeat and destruction. If we are to avoid these dooms the system must either be drastically amended or completely abandoned in favour of some other system".

Were this the view of a solitary crank there would have been little cause for anxiety in its expression. The most significant fact about such ideas, is, however that they are gaining in strength among a very influential section of the people of England—Many Englishmen are inclining to the opinion that

Democracy will always be very behind 'Dictatorship' in respect of progress and that, therefore, it had better go. Among those who have sympathy for such views are included men who control some of the great newspapers of Great Britain. The present Prime Minister of England and some at least of his colleagues are also perhaps of the same way of thinking.

Yet what strikes me as the queerest part of this business is not the admiration of the unconscious Fascists for the proclaimed ones, but the inability of those who disliked Fascist tyranny most to think of a more effective means of countering it than the adoption of a different kind of regimentation. This, to my mind, is a grievous error of method, for if history teaches us any thing it teaches us that really progressive ideas stand in no mood of the compulsion of force. Take the case of Christianity for example. It made its way into the world by sheer moral attractiveness. So will, in my belief, all ideas which contain the seed of future development and are based on the innate creativeness of man. Self-propagation is the law of their being and becoming. They will need organisation and discipline—and organisation and discipline of a higher order than can be conceived of the martinets of collective goose-step—but they will not require bloodshed, nor be suppressed by bloodshed."

To my thinking, socialism or communism or

of a Megetian for that.

I enter this plea for greater openness of mind and freedom from dogmatism not in respect of socialism alone but for the whole circle of human thought. We must not forget that political freedom, with all its urgency for us, is only a part of freedom. It must be completed as well as made possible by freedom in other spheres. I consider the maintenance of intellectual freedom—freedom of thought—to be one of the highest duties of youth. In the modern world, intellectual freedom is threatened both externally and internally. Authoritarianism is attacking it from inside, and the second danger is not a what less serious than the first. The age we live in is often called the machine age. I think it can with us much propriety be called, "the age of slogans". Their deadly blight is spreading like locusts to destroy the hard-earned intellectual harvest of mankind. Under their hypnotic sway we are very near forgetting that truth has to be upheld and discovered afresh by every age if the fountain head of human endeavour is not to run dry. It should be the mission of youth to free us from this bondage. They must liberate Truth from the many shackles of self-interest, obscurantism and mental inertia.

My call is then for freedom, freedom, no less in the things of the mind than in the social and political order. But in order to give freedom, its chance, it must have its necessary complement—discipline. By discipline I do not mean discipline induced by exter-

nal power, which is best exemplified by the regimentation prevalent in the totalitarian states. This kind of discipline and this use of power has been brilliantly analysed by Bertrand Russell in his new book on "Power" from which I would read out to you the following passage :—

"These forms of power are most nakedly and simply displaced in our dealings with animals, where disguises and pretences are not thought necessary. When a pig with a rope round its middle is hoisted squealing into a ship, it is subject to direct physical power over its body. On the other hand, when the proverbial donkey follows the proverbial carrot, we induce him to act as we wish by persuading him that it is to his interest to do so. Immediate between these two cases is that of performing animals, in whom habits have been formed by rewards and punishments also, in a different way, that of sheep induced to embark on a ship, when the leader has to be dragged across the gangway by force, and the rest then follow willingly."

All these forms of power are exemplified among human beings. "The case of pig illustrates military and police power," "The donkey with the carrot typifies the power of propaganda. "Performing animals show the power of education."

"The sheep following their unwilling leader are illustrative of party politics, whenever, as is usual, a revered leader is in bondage to a clique or to party



bosses. "Let us apply these Aesopian analogies, to the rise of Hitler—The carrot was the Nazi programme (involving, e. g., the abolition of interest), the donkey was the lower middle class. The sheep and their leader were the Social Democrats, and Thudenberg. The pigs (only so far as their misfortunes are concerned) were the victims in concentration camps, and the performing animals are the millions who make the Nazi salute."

Well, there are many even amongst us whose conception of discipline does not go beyond wearing the badge and giving the salute. I have very little respect for this kind of discipline, although I admit it might be an instrument of power for those who covert dictatorship. When I speak of discipline, I have in view a totally different state of the mind. That discipline comes from freedom, from those archaic impulses within us, which make it difficult for us to reconcile the pursuit of individuality with collective good. "Life is a pure flame, we live by an invisible sun within us," said Sir Thomas Browne. But not to all is given the perception of this invisible sun in all its undimmed glory, nor does life's flame burn at its purest at all moments. When the dust of daily life or the dross of earthly aims lie thick on us, egotism gains the mastery and makes us forget that freedom is not a single individual's privilege but the birth-right of all. It is in this forgetfulness that lies the greatest danger to freedom. We must

guard against this danger by remembering that on the highest plane self-discipline merges with freedom.

Comrades, "I welcome you all to your spiritual home. It is not a city of "dreaming spires"; nevertheless, it is your spiritual home, for it is here that the student movement had its birth about three decades ago. The site on which you and I have assembled today is almost classic ground. It is hallowed by the memories of Lal Mohan Ghose, and Surendra Nath Benerjee, Ananda Mohan Bose, Abdul Rasul, Anrolindo Ghose and Bipin Chandra Pal, Deshbandu Chittranjan Das and Deshpriya Jatindra Mohan Sen Gupta. Bear proudly the torch of freedom which they have handed over to you and hand it over in your turn, pure and unsullied, to those who are coming after you. With these words I declare this conference open."

a fatal blow to the unity and consolidation of all forces in the country that would undoubtedly have resulted in the launching of a strong campaign next year. The move has fulfilled its purpose. The Viceroy has been thanked for his sincerity to his country, its cause and its imperial interests." Proceeding, Mrs. Chattopadhyaya said, "We are fond of holding up ourselves as ready for martyrdom, but when the time comes for bearing our neck we retreat and say. Wait till the next blow. Each time the coward gets the better of it. Start civil disobedience, declare an independent republic, establish a parallel government, do it at any cost and any sacrifice."

Mrs. Kamla Devi asked the youths not to merely pass resolutions even at the risk of being called traitors. It was most dishonest and demoralising to pass resolutions unless they were prepared to carry them out, by some definite plan of work. The youth must take a bold leap for better or worse. Did not Ireland fight for one hundred years? If the youths meant to declare that they stood for the freedom of India, they must sit down and draw up a course of action for launching the movement. It would be attacked mercilessly, it would be crushed, but out of each such ruin would rise a newer and better spirit, chastened and refined by each martyrdom.

Referring to the question of Indian States, the President said that she could not imagine a free India where the autocratic rule of the Princes was tolerated.

Mrs. Kamla Devi asked the youths to fight against the many social evils rampant in society. She said that all temples must be nationalised.

The President continued:—

"The term 'Red' is much abused and misunderstood. It usually means fighting with guns, but with us it can only mean a great upheaval through moral force, for a disarmed nation has no choice in the matter, even apart from the ethical, moral or the practical view point. Thus I am sure, youth will recreate an 'India' for glorious than she has ever been in the past."

"I should like to begin, by referring to that subject which is encircled by the flaming sign of red, namely, politics. I hope the controversy that has raged round it is a thing of the past. It was Curzon who said that politics is merely contemporary history and education itself demands that students should take an intelligent interest in it. But in India where politics is a matter of life and death it is utter stupidity to ask students to merely maintain a detached academic interest in this burning topic. To ask students to fold their hands, shut their eyes and close their ears while vast devastation around them goes on is like preaching moderation to the rescuers when a house is on fire. What is this knowledge which you

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\*Address delivered by Shrimati Kamla Devi Chattopadhyaya in the All Bengal Students Conference held in Calcutta on March, 6, 1931.

seek in cold isolation when humanity around is 'crying out for justice? Whom should it benefit if the atmosphere were to impose upon you dumbness, blindness and deafness?

You can hit at the end of your career quoted the great artist Leonerd Devincie :—"While I thought I was learning to live, I was but learning how to die?" Politics in the wide sense is the totality of all guiding principles, methods, systems which determine collective activities in all dominions of life. You might say that it is rather superfluous to refer to this topic at this stage when the tangled web seems to be unwinding itself and the sky is full of the colour of hope and India's confident that the end is in sight. But I must frankly confess I am not so sure that the achievement of what I would call freedom is in sight.

Freedom is a condition where there is practical equality of opportunity resulting in two issues. Every man will have a fair chance to make himself all that in him lies, to reach the highest point to which his capacities can carry him, to get for himself and his wife all that he has earned by the sweat of his labour. The state will get the highest service from each man. Then alone can we say with any truth we have attained the substance of Independence that we have been striking for. And for this purpose the students will have to devote their full time and attention. It is at this University of Humanity that you will have

to offer your life and get your Degree of Freedom. There is no greater knowledge than that of self-respect. Slavery is ignorance, and you are but deceiving yourselves if you think you are building up your future, and that of the country by being content to shut yourself up in these tomb-like colleges where instruments of exploitation of the weak are hummerat out and the laboratories produce but the horrors of war.

No man ever remains free who acquiesces in what he knows to be a wrong. Those are always most true citizens who insist upon bringing back our rulers to a realisation of the conditions on which their rule is held. It is your duty to be, therefore, the voice of the millions who are voiceless and of them that are weak or oppressed, of those disinherited of the beauty of life and for whom there is no deliverance, to whom the world will still remain a prison in spite of the much eulogised substance of independence. Unless there is a definite and radical reconstitution of society as it stands at present, freedom will be only a dream.

A mere transference of power from one group to another will leave the average toiler just where he was.

Patch-work reforms are like having a hydra for freedom to be a practical ideal. All seekers after freedom have ever given a new ideal to the world. Christ and Buddha overleaped all that the seers and the wisemen had laid down. No young man who

is out for great achievement can ever be satisfied, no matter in what department of life, unless he has created an entirely new ideal. I should like to quote a profound line from one of the songs of your sweet singer Rabindra Nath, "True end is not in the reaching of the limit but in a completion which is limitless" Thus the task which is before our students to-day is the creation of a new ideology with a firm rationalistic basis. It means the discarding on of a campaign against all social and economic oppression. Certain ideas have been handed on to us on which we have to turn a very critical eye and search beneath the surface, and see how far they fill in with our new scheme.

Take the great idea of the boycott of foreign goods. It is a powerful instrument no doubt to wield against an imperial power and we should certainly make it as effective as possible. But at the same time, one cannot help nothing with sad regret and pain that while we have been jubilant over the idea of striking a blow at Britain's industrial prosperity and increasing our own; we have entirely left out of account the main factors which have been instrumental in achieving this brilliant victory, namely the industrial workers. While the industrialists have been making huge profits, the condition of the workers is just where it was. I cannot speak for all the noted industrial centres but that is now it has been in Bombay and I should not be surprised if it applied

to other places as well. This is one of the many dangers that lurk in every corner and trap us in their coil.

Turning to the peasantry we are confronted with similar difficulties. Our attention is so absorbed in condemning a taxation that we feel it very oppressive but little do we bother about the merciless robbing of the peasants by the landlords whose only claim to their wealth is their idleness.

We talk glibly of 60 millions who cannot get one square meal a day and how the average income is but 2 annas. Even the peasant proprietors are in a miserable state on an average, he has only 2 acres of land whereas in England the distribution is 20 acres per head and in South Africa 83 acres. And when we realise that there are 7 lacs of villages, the struggle of these people for their daily bread seems to be enormous. According to some figures nearly 70 millions of people out of the total that are trying to eke out a living on the land in their possession, are in excess which means that this extra population ought to be absorbed elsewhere. For this purpose even at a highly industrialised condition it is doubtful whether India can solve the problem of offering a decent living to every one of them unless there is a redistribution on a more humane and equitable basis. When the new State of Czechoslovakia was formed, it had to face a similar difficulty and boldly handled the problem by resorting to redistribution



people, we can solve far more easily our communal and caste differences than any other method.

'We can fight against these cankers with ruthlessness if we have a definite organised rebellion that we can carry on against all social oppression. There is often a tendency to side-track the issue and go off into minor channels where these social difficulties are concerned. Take, for instance, the depressed classes who are now agitating for temple-entry in certain places. This question is merely one of the many aspects of the whole social system which is based on tyranny and exploitation and it is against this system itself that we have to fight. These differences and distinctions between man and man which have religious backing up behind it, have led, as we know, to so much demoralisation. Temples have become corrupt and dirty and are now in the hands of those who in the name of religion terrify people and kill their reasoning faculty.'

'A large amount of wealth is sunk in these temples with no benefit to any one, while people starve at these very temple-doors. It is impossible to enumerate all the horrors which our social system upholds and that is why I say that it is necessary to fight against the system itself, destroy all religious exploitation and the tyranny of priest-craft, for it is the system that is at the root of all our communal troubles and it is this which has created religious fanaticism and tyranny leading ultimately to communal squabble.

and hence national disunion.

In the field of culture the signs of decay are prominent too, the cultural conquest of India has been one of the saddest features of our present day. Beauty is the soul of freedom, for, beauty is but the expansion of consciousness. The very root of our existence has gone dry—how can then the leaves be fed or how can the flowers come forth and yield fruits.

Cheap commercial commodities have usurped the old artistic object of every-day use. Even the children in the villages are today feeding their imagination on the Dunlop Tyre advertisements and match labels with which they cover their walls, and it is not to be wondered at when we realise how poor we have grown in the creative field and how little we have done to fight against the onslaught of hybrids which is the natural result when two cultures clash when they meet not as comrades but as the conquered and the conquerer. The desire for beauty and colour is inherent to every one and it must seek its fulfilment in some form however crude and drab it may be.

The artistic starvation of millions of people is too pathetic for word and it is tragic when we realise on what poor stuff the growing minds are feeding themselves. There is no doubt that our educational system is greatly responsible for this tragedy.

In conclusion I wish to answer one argument that is always put forward against students activity, joining any movement as full time workers and this is

the fact that they are ultimately uncared for and at the mercy of chance. I admit that this has been the case in the past but let us remember that it has been so, for the simple reason that movement in the past have had only a very narrow ideal and ended by leaving power and opportunities of life still in the hands of a few. But when a mass movement is organised for capturing power for the masses, it can lead only to a condition where not only the average student but the average man in the street will have come into his own.

*"The leaders of the future will come out of you and others like you. Prepare yourselves for the destiny that awaits you. It is your great good fortune that you will live in the New India which is being born before your very eyes. It will be your joy and privilege to serve and worship India re-born and free, India, occupying an honoured place among the nations of the world, India, seeking to serve humanity, India, the friend of all and enemy of none; India, the link between the East and the West. May you become her true sons and faithful worshippers."*

*Munshi Ishwar Saran.*

*Youth alone can break through the traditions—rigid and discarded beliefs, to find a way to new achievements and I ask you my young friends to realise that call to exert yourselves and seek the truth, not the knowledge that lies buried in books but the true knowledge that can only come from intellectual effort."*

*Sir C. V. Raman.*

## VII

\*Mr. Chairman and Friends—

Never before in modern times has India been so deeply stirred as she is to-day. The idea of freedom has caught her imagination and for its attainment and retention an ever-increasing number of men as well as women is ready to go through every suffering and to make all sacrifices. The spirit of freedom pervades not only the realm of politics but is making itself felt in many other departments of our national thought and activity. Old ideas are crumbling and tradition is losing its way. A new hope and afresh faith are inspiring our hearts and there is visible on all sides a solemn determination to revive and increase our past glory. The atmosphere is filled with the spirit of service and sacrifice. A session of your Conference held at a time like this has an importance all its own and I am very grateful that you have called upon me to render you such little assistance as I can at this important juncture. I prize the honour that you have been pleased to confer on me.

Freedom is coming, but do not forget, gentlemen, I pray you, the serious responsibilities it entails.

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\* Munshi Ishwar Saran's Presidential address at the Bihar Students Conference held at Arrak on 20th October 1931.

Those who by severe preparation and strict discipline do not equal themselves for the right exercise of freedom often make a mess of their country and its future. History contains instances where liberty has degenerated into license, license has led to chaos and chaos has brought about the extinction of freedom itself. The retention of freedom, I beg you to remember, is far more difficult than its acquisition.

What then is the task before you? Those of you who truly long to be the soldiers of freedom on other aim is really worth having must first of all liberate your minds. Don't yield unquestioning obedience to authority. Don't allow tradition to frighten you. Don't follow blindly any man however great. Don't accept anything on trust. Examine carefully any idea that is placed before you. Welcome all that is good, reject all that is evil. Believe me, no country in the world has been a greater victim of tradition than this unhappy land of ours. And no community has suffered more than the Hindu community from the carping and degrading effects of tradition than this unhappy land of ours. And no community has suffered more than the Hindu community from the carping and degrading effects of tradition and custom. At every step and in all directions tradition mocks us and without any resistance we succumb to its tyranny. The tragedy of the situation is that even educated men invent arguments, mind you, all of them are not in sincere, in justification of every absurdity and their

enfeebled minds seek shelter in some book of hoary antiquity. I venture to submit that no book, however ancient or authoritative, should be allowed to convert human beings into slaves who dare not exercise their reasoning or critical faculty. I am happy to find that Mahatma Gandhi who, according to his own declaration believes in the Vedas, the Upanishads, the Purans and all that goes by the name of Hindu Scriptures and therefore in 'Avtars and re-birth's is not in favour of surrendering our judgment even to our Shastras' says he, 'I shall not make a fetish of religion and I cannot justify any evil in its sacred name. I have no desire to carry one single soul with me, if I cannot convince him by an appeal to his reason. I shall even go to the length of rejecting the divinity of the most ancient Shastras if they do not appeal to my reason.' Pray do not misunderstand my position. I yield to no one in my admiration of any loyalty to Hinduism which I consider to be the most precious heritage of our race. The world is waiting for its message and it is for us to carry it to far-off lands. But make no mistake. The Hinduism which will enrich the world is the Hinduism which enables and inspires and not the Hinduism which demands unreasoning acquiescence from its votaries.

Some of us—happily their number is fast diminishing—have transferred their allegiance from one tradition to another. The tradition of the West they have substituted for the tradition of the East and in

the name of culture and enlightenment they perpetrate shocking acts of vandalism. While they decay our own institution, they dare not question even the most trivial rules of Western etiquette. Their foreign mode of thought, foreign garb and foreign tastes should be objects of profound pity. Little do they realise that blind imitation is the surest proof of what Mahatma Gandhi has called 'slave mentality'

It should be your aim and endeavour to destroy this mentality. Free India will need institutions which will foster and develop freedom and for the construction for a new order of things, the first requisite is the capacity to think fearlessly. Our past—to deny its greatness is to betray gross ignorance—should spur us to strenuous activity in order to make the future mightier than the past but to hold that our past was perfect and free, all blemish is to ignore the law of evolution. On the other hand, the humiliating craze for imitation of the west and a sub-conscious desire to convert India into another Europe is a new and more dangerous malady which should be ruthlessly exterminated. Remember, friends, the world is in sore need of India which will have the wisdom and courage to think its own thoughts and to live its own life. India loses all value if it is to be only a faint and feeble copy of the West. The world wants originals and not copies. It should be your ambition and pride to give to humanity the India that again in the future



as in the past makes its own distinct and distinctive contribution to the enlightenment and advancement of the world.

If you break away from crude traditions and senseless customs of recent growth your ideas about sex will necessarily undergo a deep and radical transformation. You will realise that women has as important a function in life to discharge as a man. It is a crime to impede herself realisation and self-impression. It should be your privilege to resist her to fulfil her destiny. Friends, I beg you to consider the colossal stupidity and cruelty of the attitude of many of us, men, who feel inclined to dictate to women. I respect and admire man's anxiety to serve women, but I fail to appreciate his wish to dominate. If you desire to view this problem in its true prospective, you will have to make a long and sustained mental effort to change your angle of vision. Our minds for long have been running in a particular groove to alter their course and direction.

I shall make, if I may, one or two concrete suggestions in this connection to provoke thought and even controversy you have to create such an atmosphere that no woman should ever feel the slightest sense of insecurity in any public place or conveyance. Every woman should be heartened by the conviction that as long as there is one single educated young man alive and as long as he can help it, no harm or insult can befall her. Every young man should be eager to spring

forward to the rescue of a woman regardless of all personal consequences to himself. This sense of security will be the most effective means of abolishing purdah.

I venture that there is no young man present here today who upholds the horrors of purdah.— Apart from other consideration if we want to live, we must banish purdah from our midst, it is inhuman, who does not know that thousands of women die of phthisis every year because we in our wisdom have decided to keep them shut up in the houses where air and light have not much free access? Strange are our notions of responsibility, the greater the responsibility a family claims, the greater the rigidity with which it observes purdah. No Hindu can have the hardhood to assert that this wretched practice have any religious sanction behind it, blind custom and agonising cowardice alone are responsible for its continuance. With the growth and spread of girls' education will become more real and liberal. The growth and spread of education will force a change in the laws of marriage and rules of inheritance. It will give a new position and a new status to our women who will become as great upholders of India's dignity, honour and freedom as men themselves.

Not a whitless urgent is the crusade that you have to carry on against communalism. Friends, it is a humiliating confession to make, but truth must be told. The nationalism of most of us is only skin-

deep. You scratch a nationalist and you find a communalist. And what is infinitely worse is that Hindus among themselves are hopelessly divided. Can we honestly say that, for instance, a Bhummihar Brahmin regards a Kayastha as his brother or a Kayastha makes no distinction between another Kayastha and a Vaish who does not know that during elections not a few of us try to take advantage of this separatist feeling? Who does not know that in matters of appointments this feeling sometimes makes us commit jobbery in the name of adequate caste representation? Do not some of our ministers, legislators and public men, most of whom are graduates, for their own ignoble personal ends for the flame of communalism? Would not at least some of our so-called leaders who have manoeuvred themselves into the kind light drop into utter oblivion and absolute nothingness if they ceased to take advantage of and encourage communal bitterness and strife? It is my deliberate conviction that our educated men cannot escape their share of responsibility for the growth of communalism. Happily, in villages, comparatively speaking, this deadly poison has not produced its pernicious effects as it has done in large towns and cities. But if immediate and stern measures are not adopted, I am afraid, there will be such a conflagration in the country that it will consume all our hope for the future.

In pleading for nationalism, I am not thinking,

I assure you, of the present fight for Swaraj. A nation's greatness is not founded on the decision of any Round Table Conference, it is up to you, gentlemen, to take a vow that in all civic matters you will not allow religion, race or caste to influence your judgment or action. Do not think in terms of caste or community. Every Indian should be equally dear to you. A Brahman or a Dan, a Muslim or a Christian, an Anglo-Indian or a domiciled Englishman, in deed every one is born of the common mother should have equality of rights and opportunities. It is a crime to make distinction between one Indian and another on the grounds, race, religion or caste. Unless this feeling becomes real, all talk of nationalism is sheer hypocrisy. Remember, our Salvation lies in nationalism, communalism will only lead to our destruction.

You, friends, can make a beginning at once. Being to think as Indians, it will require, believe me, terrible effort to do so. The surrounding atmosphere is surcharged with communalism and it is by no means easy to resist its baneful influence. You should be prepared to meet with failures and disappointments. Do not be daunted or disheartened by them. Keep your faith in nationalism undimmed. Let not the communalism of your friends and colleagues throw your mind out of gear.

Do not say, as alas! so many actually, "I have been acting honestly and sincerely as a nationalist

students at Marseilles he observed, 'Real education consisted not in packing the brain with so many facts and figures, not in passing examinations by reading numerous books but in developing character, very highly. if I may say so with all respect, he said in the same speech, a nation loses its liberty owing to some of its own weakness and we find that immediately we shed our weakness, we regain our liberty.'

I have been interested in education and connected with educational institutions all my life and as one day succeeds another the conviction grows deeper and stronger in me that character lies at the root of all progress and all success. It is nothing short of a tragedy that character-building does not receive that attention at home or at school or college as it should. The parents are satisfied if their young hopefuls creditably get through some public examinations and the worth of an educational institution is measured by the percentage of its passes. I am surprised that the result of this neglect is not more deplorable than it actually is. Does it not happen that a lad secures a first place in his class but is unwilling or unable to protect a tiny little fellow who is being bullied or ill-treated by some big boy? What is worse is, that he is unconscious and his duty to his younger or weaker brother. Does it not happen that a man tops the list in the B. A. or B. Sc. examination but refuses to go even to Burma or Ceylon—not to mention more distant lands—on a good salary and with excellent pros-

pects? He lacks that energy and initiative as will impel him to think of untrodden fields. Anything unfamiliar is beyond his ken. The present unemployment of the educated classes is the result of diverse causes but I venture to submit that lack of enterprise is most certainly one of them. The spirit of adventure, capacity to take risks, the courage to face difficulties and the determination to conquer the world I assure you, make you better men and citizens as well as improve your prospects.

There is one aspect of this question, gentlemen, which you will pardon my saying, fills me with indescribable pain and a quish. You make eloquent speeches and write slashing articles condemning social evils but very seldom, if ever, you consider it your duty to translate your views into action. You attack the system of tilak and jahez but you yourselves directly or indirectly become a parties to their demand and acceptance. You know as well as any body else that this pernicious custom is ruining many poor families and is blasting the lives of many girls and still you do not feel called upon to take practical steps to save the people from this ruination and humiliation. You deceive yourselves when you say that the responsibility is not yours but of your parents. How many more snehlatas will have to burn themselves to death before your conscience will be aroused? It is my unalterable faith that the agony of these unhappy girls and their

families goes to Heaven and calls for curses on those who directly or indirectly countenance or encourage this abominable practice. A young man with character would say with folded hands and with most genuine and profound love and respect, 'father, I am ready to do anything at your bidding but not even for you am I prepared to participate in this social crime. This shame is not possible.' Take another example. You rail at 'pardah' but do not possess the courage to take out your little sister even for a walk in the open air. What is the value, I ask, of all your talk of manliness if you do not have the nerve to put up a strong fight against evil? Purify and strengthen your character, because India needs men and not spineless individuals.

Intellect is of course very valuable but do not please exaggerate its importance; intact alone will take you neither to success nor to distinction in life. It is character, taken in its broad and comprehensive sense, which elevates a man and a nation. Have you ever paused to consider why a tiny little island in the Atlantic is one of the most dominating factors in the modern world? Why is England great? I do not know what answer others may give to the question, but my answer is short and simple, because her sons and daughters have character.

During my several visits to England I have been struck not only by the character of English boys and girls but also by their physique. I do not forget that

they are rich and we are distressingly poor. I also remember that they have a colder climate than ours but after making allowance for these circumstances we must acknowledge that they attach far greater value to health than we do. Look at this problem from any angle and the conclusion is inevitable that a boy or a girl owes his or her first duty to his or her body. How many of our young men and women systematically try to make their bodies strong and beautiful? Friends, physical beauty is a thing not to be despised.

: Permit me to pause for a moment here and make a submission to those who feel horrified at the very idea of our girls going in for any physical exercise. I humbly ask them if the bodies of boys and girls are so different in constitution and that the former needs exercise but the latter does not. Why, in the name of common sense, should girls be prevented from improving and strengthening their bodies more particularly when they have to bear the strain of childbirth? We have begun to establish girls' schools but very seldom we think of providing them with playgrounds. It is for you to fight this prejudice down.

But even in this case of boys there are not a few parents as well as teachers who grudge the time spent over physical games and exercises. This attitude is responsible for the death of so many of our distinguished men in the prime of life. A man at



fifty begins to expect the visit of the angel of death and nervously, waits for him. His relations and friends look upon him as an old man past all work. He himself talks as if he is half-dead. I want you, gentlemen, to avoid this fate. You can do so provided you start from now looking after your bodies. You should create such mentality that feebleness or flabbiness of the body may be looked upon as a disgrace and a humiliation. Your muscles should give you as much satisfaction and pride as your first class first at a University or some other public examination. May I, in this connection, relate the experience of an Indian youth at a British University? He applied for admission and the authority concerned was reluctant to admit him. He produced all his certificates and testimonials but they created no effect. In sheer despair the youngman blurted out that he had been the captain of the hockey team of his college. Instantly came the remark, 'Oh! that alters the situation'. The applicant was admitted. Has not this a lesson for you and your teachers and guardians.

The next topic I ask permission slightly to touch, is discipline. Remember, friends. I want you to submit to no tyranny of any shape or description. I fully realise my responsibility and anxiously weigh my words when I say that you should rebel against any authority which is designed to crush your independence and manliness. Tyranny masquerading in the garb of discipline should be fought against and

shown no quarter. At the same time, I beg you to appreciate the value of true discipline. A body of undisciplined men is a mob and it becomes an army only when it is disciplined. You cannot lead if you have not learnt to obey. The lack of discipline and organisation makes our corporate life feeble and ineffective. What can you expect where everybody is a law unto himself? What would happen to a hostel if the hostlers set at naught the authority of the warden? What would happen to a college if the students defied the principal? The plain answer is disorder and disruption.

Closely allied with discipline is the question of organisation. For national success, organisation is absolutely essential. A nation that is disorganised has not the ghost of chance of making its mark in modern world. An Indian visitor to the West is vastly impressed by the organisation that he sees all around him there. Go to any place and you will find unmistakable evidence of organisation. I shall ask you to make a beginning. Organise your clubs and other movements. The lesson learnt now will stand you in good stead in after life.

I have purposely placed before you, gentlemen, only a very few ideas in the hope that you might confine yourselves to them during the next twelve months. Concentration is essential for Success. Suppose you take up the question of physique and

Tilak and Jahez at this session. Suppose you take up the question of Physique and tilak and jahez at this gathering. Throughout the year work devotedly for the improvement of your bodies and for the destruction of the hated system of dowry. At the succeeding session consider the progress made and then decide if you will take up any fresh questions or will continue your present activities. Allow no resolution to exist merely on paper. Every resolution that you adopt should register your solemn determination to put into practice some resolve of yours. Let not your Conference be like so many other Conferences which begin and end in talk. Insincere talk disgusts the listener and debases the talker.

I know I have spoken strongly but I hope I shall be forgiven if I assure you that I have felt equally strongly.

The leaders of the future will come out of you and others like you. Prepare yourselves for the destiny that awaits you. It is your great good fortune that you will live in the New India which is being born before your very eyes. It will be your joy and privilege to serve and worship India re-born and free, India, occupying an honoured place among the nations of the world, India, seeking to serve humanity, India, the friend of all and enemy of none, India, the link between the East and the West. May you become her true sons and faithful worshippers !

(2)

A great deal of nonsense has been talked and written about the well-worn topic of students and politics. I will state my conclusions on the matter, for your careful consideration. I will make a distinction between student below eighteen, and student above eighteen. To students below eighteen, I will venture to suggest that they serve themselves and their country best, by keeping aloof from active participation in politics. I do not want them to be blind or deaf to what is going on around them. I want them to watch, see and listen. I want them to develop the great qualities of courage, patriotism, and self-sacrifice. But they are too young to be of any use in politics at the age, and if they wait some time, and prepare themselves they will be of greater service in politics. Of course, I except those who feel the irresistible call of their country and do not like to stay at school or at college. They are the exception, and no general rule can bind them.

But with regard to students above eighteen years, I have no hesitation in saying that they will lose nothing, but will gain a great deal, if they respond to the call even to take active part in politics. In their case, I would utter only the caution. Most of them are independent on their parents or guardians. They owe it to them to get their consent, before they break away

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\*Mr. S. Satyamurti Presidential speech at the Bengal Students' Conference, which opened its Session on 3rd Oct. 1931, at Calcutta.

from their moorings. Again, I except those who feel the irresistible call. I am not impressed by the jejune argument that their education will be spoiled. If education means as it ought to be, the training of the mind, the building up of the body and the fitting of a man to respond to the noble impulses in him, active participation in the politics of a subject country, fighting non-violently for freedom is the very best education which any boy or girl can get.

In all provinces of India, the one problem which stares educated men in their face is that of unemployment. There is no patent cure for it. Its historical inevitability must have been foreseen. It was not hence the tragedy. Lord Macaulay's minute, which was the foundation of modern university education in this country, deliberately stated that the main object of education to be imparted to the natives, was to train clerks for the East India Company, and in spite of many changes, some of them wholesome, our universities and colleges have largely remained clerk-manufacturing factories. The radical remedy for this chronic state of unemployment will come only with the establishment of Swaraj Government in our country. Today the main avenues of employment for our educated men are only the overcrowded government and other offices, and the still more overcrowded profession of law or medicine. But under the Swaraj Government, the army, the navy, the air force, the mercantile marine service, the indigenous and

foreign banks of the country, the great trading houses which will then come into existence, the industries which will then be established, agriculture which will then be radically improved and will flourish and many other spheres of national activity will offer ample field for the employment of the talent of the educated with the country ; I would ask you to wait in patience for that state of affairs ; that is bound to come in two or three years.

Meantime, I would ask you not to waste your energy. There is plenty of work lying before us. Desh-bandhu Das had evolved a fine and well thought-out scheme of village re-construction in Bengal, which would have absorbed the energies of hundreds of our young educated men and women, and would have transformed our villages. The cruel hand of death snatched him away from us before he could mature his plans. But, if not on that grand scale, on a modest scale, it is still possible for you to spread yourselves in the villages and become centres of culture and usefulness. I am not painting a mere utopia. I make a practical suggestion, which I should like to carry out. Go and settle in a village, where you are not altogether unknown. Take some beautiful books, pictures and a gramophone with good plates of good music with you, take also a chest of medicines, learning how to use the medicines. Learn the art of spinning and weaving and the art of teaching it to others. Learn something about agriculture. Settle in the village, help the

village folk to spend their evenings on their leisure moments with some happiness. Cure their ordinary ailments. Read the books, show the pictures and play the gramophone to them. Take interest in their affairs, help them to resist the petty tyranny of the small revenue, irrigation and police officials. Represent their grievances so the higher authorities help them to keep the village clean and sanitary, help them to fight epidemics, teach their children in a small school, by and by, you will find a place in their hearts, and also in their purses. It is not going to be an easy work, to begin with. But I am confident that, if tried on a proper scale and with sufficient patience, it is bound to yield very good results. Anyhow, under the Swaraj Government, we must have five year or ten year plan, to transform our villages into living, virile, healthy units of a free resurgent nation. You may be pioneers in that work. The fashion in India today, with some people, is to think always and to talk sometime of Bengal as the hot bed of violence. It is a libel on the fair name of Bengal. Her sons and daughters are so recklessly patriotic, that some of them resort to deeds which are violent. But they form a very small microscopic minority. I am not a philosopher. Therefore, I will not indulge in the ethics or the non-ethics of violence, as opposed to non-violence. That is too profound a subject for me. For, is it possible for me to say that violence has always been ineffective, and non-violence alone effective? On

the other hand, the history of man to the year of grace-1931, illustrates only one increasing purpose, viz. that violence is to be the ultimate arbiter in the affairs of nations. But there is one streak of light in the otherwise dark clouds of human history viz., that men are slowly learning that it is better to count heads than to break them, even in the affairs of nations, just as they have learnt that lesson, slowly and painfully, in the affairs of the individual. But while other nations may take their own time to learn this lesson, India has made her choice and, in my opinion rightly, under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi, to use only the weapon of non-violence, in her struggle for freedom. There is principle behind that, India struggles for her freedom, not only for her ownself, but also for the sake of a war-weary world. She wants to give to the world her age-along message of "Peace on earth and good will to all men." She cannot do so if she wins her own freedom through violence for the sake of the world.

She is also pledged to non-violence, for her own sake. Fortunately or unfortunately, India to-day is a land of differing creeds and castes. That she may be welded into once strong-willed nation, is the hope of every lover of the country. Non-violence is the easiest platform on which they can so unite. Communal violence is the worst form of violence and once it is allowed to spread, the prospects of Indian nationhood will recede rapidly into the back ground. A



foreign irresponsible Government will always find it difficult to fight violence in a subject race. A Swaraj Government, backed by public opinion, can alone deal effectively with violence. Those of us, therefore, who desire that violence should disappear in this country at the earliest possible moment must pray and work for an honourable and peaceful settlement being arrived at between great Britain and India at the Round Table Conference. That will be the radical cure for violence. If Mahatma Gandhi be allowed to return empty-handed to India, God help Great Britain and India.

I am anxious that we should be clear in our minds as to what we want. Some of you may have followed the recent controversy in the columns of "Young India" between Mahatma Gandhi and myself on this matter. Do we want political power or reforms? My answer is emphatic. We want political power to rule ourselves as we wish. I am glad that Mahatma Gandhi has expressed the same sentiment in England. He wants power for his country men "even to sin." The point can admit of no doubt at all. If, tomorrow, Great Britain were to make India dry, prohibit the import of all foreign cloth, help agriculture considerably, establish industries and banks in the sole interest of India, and add to the wealth of the nation, even then, I would not acquiesce in the continuance of British rule in this country. For I would rather be a member of a free nation, some of whom drink alcohol, some

of whom dress themselves in foreign cloth, and which is no very rich, rather than a member of a nation of slaves, none of whom drinks, all of whom wear Khaddar, and where wealth accumulates, but men decay. Clear thinking on this matter is essential. There is one constructive method of nation-building works, in which you should all take part today. Communism is the poison which is corroding the body politic of India. It must be ruthlessly cut out. You must learn to think, speak and act in terms of the nations. In the secular field of Government, there is no room for caste or creed. The prosperity and adversity of the state *affect all citizens, irrespective of their caste or creed.* The efficiency of the individual alone counts in the modern state, and not his antenatal accident, when India gains freedom, the services of communities will be assessed, if at all, not by the title holders and by the toadies among them, but by the number of brave men and women who sacrificed themselves in the struggle for the country's freedom. Communal minorities have nothing to fear, under a democratic Government, if their religion, culture, language and customs, so far as they are not inconsistent with public order in morality are statutorily protected, as they will be in Swaraj India. Majorities in Indian Legislature will not be communal, but will consist of all communities. Separate electorates cannot soften the rigors of majority rule, if the majorities be communal. No separate community can prosper under Swaraj, every

whether a law should be obeyed or not, and act accordingly. A Swaraj Government can function efficiently, if its citizens learn that majority rule must be obeyed, so long as the minority is given the fullest right to convert itself into a majority. The majority may become so tyrannical, the minorities may be justified in resorting to passive resistance. But that should be an exception and not the rule. You have great work in propagating the sound doctrines. I invite you to do so.

(3)

I very highly appreciate the honour which the Reception Committee of your Congress has done me by inviting me to preside over the Madras Youth Congress. I readily accepted the invitation deeply conscious as I am, that, by no stretch of imagination, can I claim to call myself or to be called a youth; but, after all, a man is as old as he feels, and a woman is as old as she looks. I claim to feel as youthful among you. I have no doubt, that as a result of my presiding over this Congress, I shall feel younger.

ion, (2) that redress in this matter is available to the people of the Indian States in the Federal Supreme Court and (3) that the representatives of the Indian states to the Federal Legislature, at least to the Lower House, are elected by the people of the Indian States! What will happen in this matter is too soon to say. But I am no very enthusiastic about a federation of all Indian just now. I am also clearly against the proposal to vest the residuary power of the federation in the federating units. The centrifugal tendencies in our country are so great, and the centripetal forces yet so weak that I am anxious that no step should be taken which will strengthen the former and weaken the latter. There is, however, one direction in which you can help the triumph of Indian nationalism over narrow Provincialism. Be proud that you are Bengalees, but be prouder that you are Indians.

After Swaraj is obtained, we shall have to fight many enemies inside and outside our country.

Satyagraha and non-payment of taxes and disobedience of laws are the future Swaraj Government if it has to continually fight among its own citizens, Satyagrahis, passive resisters, and law-breakers. There is a dangerous doctrine today that Satyagraha is a more potent weapon than the ballot box. It may or may not be; but no civilised Government can exist, if every citizen thereof claims the right to decide for himself whether a tax should be paid or not, or

community also will. These are fundamental elementary truths, but some communal leaders are deliberately made to forget them. I appeal to you, to whatever community you may belong, to spread these truths far and wide, and to exercise the demon of communalism from the country.

I need not elaborate, to a student audience in Bengal, the need for Swadeshi; and the Boycott of all foreign goods. This is intended mainly as an economic weapon. Boycott has been and may be used again as a political weapon. But, to-day under the terms of the Gandhi-Irwin Pact, we cannot and we do not advocate the boycott of British goods as such. But we are entitled and bound to preach and practise Swadeshi. We must go in for Swadeshi goods wherever possible, and as far as possible. We must boycott all foreign goods. The only exceptions, I would make, are medicines, books and necessities for our industries. We are all today talking of the Indian Federation including the Indian states. Mahatma Gandhi is extremely nice to the Indian Princes, and does not mind their coming into Indian Federation, remaining small autocrats in their own states. But the Maharaja of Bikaner does not respond. He lays down impossible conditions. I personally feel that the Indian Federation must stop with the Indian Provinces, leaving it to the Indian states to come in, if they want to, on the following conditions, viz., (1) that the fundamental rights of the Federa-

ion, (2) that redress in this matter is available to the people of the Indian States in the Federal Supreme Court and (3) that the representatives of the Indian states to the Federal Legislature, at least to the Lower House, are elected by the people of the Indian States. What will happen in this matter is too soon to say. But I am no very enthusiastic about a federation of all Indian just now. I am also clearly against the proposal to vest the residuary power of the federation in the federating units. The centrifugal tendencies in our country are so great, and the centripetal forces yet so weak that I am anxious that no step should be taken which will strengthen the former and weaken the latter. There is, however, one direction in which you can help the triumph of Indian nationalism over narrow Provincialism. Be proud that you are Bengalees, but be prouder that you are Indians.

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whether a law should be obeyed or not, and act accordingly. A Swaraj Government can function efficiently, if its citizens learn that majority rule must be obeyed, so long as the minority is given the fullest right to convert itself into a majority. The majority may become so tyrannical, the minorities may be justified in resorting to passive resistance. But that should be an exception and not the rule. You have great work in propagating the sound doctrines. I invite you to do so.

## (3)

I very highly appreciate the honour which the Reception Committee of your Congress has done me by inviting me to preside over the Madras Youth Congress. I readily accepted the invitation deeply conscious as I am, that, by no stretch of imagination, can I claim to call myself or to be called a youth; but, after all, a man is as old as he feels, and a woman is as old as she looks. I claim to feel as youthful among you. I have no doubt, that as a result of my presiding over this Congress, I shall feel younger.

I congratulate you on summoning this Congress. Youth is a beautiful time, but it is also a time of great opportunities, such as do not recur. Whether you utilise or waste those opportunities it depends upon you. No single youth can tackle and solve successfully

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\*Mr. S. Satyamurthi's address on the Madras Youth Conference held at Madras on 20th November 1934.

the great and many problems which face Indian youth today, when a new nation is practically being recreated. It is right, therefore, that you should meet and discuss problems, concerning yourselves and the country.

The most important and urgent problem before you is to retain and develop your youthful spirit and outlook on life. Alas! In this country we now grow prematurely old. Pessimism has a peculiar fascination for certain minds. It suits intellectual and moral laziness. Things are fairly depressing all round. But depression was never met by an attitude of defeatism. I would earnestly appeal to all of you to cultivate a robust and optimistic view of life. It is right, it is also helpful. If only youngmen and young women in our country will make up their minds to conspire with fate and to grasp this sorry scheme of things entire, then they may well feel called upon to shatter it to pieces, so that they may rebuild it nearer their hearts' desire. I am not an iconoclast, nor do I want you to become iconoclasts, but when I see round me prematurely old young people adding to the national wall, I feel tempted to ask you to get out of yourselves. In a word, I should like you to be self reliant, hopeful, and cheerful.

I shall be told that unemployment is rife among educated youths, and that they cannot afford to be happy. After all, happiness is a state of mind. In my experience, I have seen more happiness among the



poor than among the rich. A happy man will more successfully deal with the problem of life, than an unhappy man. On this very problem of unemployment, I should like you to ask yourselves, whether the bulk of you who have to deal with that problem have yet done anything by way of constructive thinking or acting. I do not want to suggest heroic solutions or quack remedies. But I do not feel that, to the adventurous and bold young man or woman, there are fields of employment, which have not been touched by them. I shall give but one illustration. The talkie has come to stay with us. The rage for Talkies, especially in Indian languages like Hindi or Tamil, seems to be unlimited though yet in its infancy. Young, amateur talent from Madras has already distinguished itself, in the production of the Tamil Talkie of Sita Kalyanam which has already been running some weeks, and which will run some months more, wherever Tamil is spoken. A good Talkie like that gives honourable and lucrative employment to fifty educated young men and women. I invite you to explore the possibilities of this profession.

Or, again, take the South Indian stage or South Indian music. Third-rate artists producing third rate plays with primitive dress and primitive scenery still hold the field. You can count the first class musicians on the fingers of your hand. There is plenty of talent among you. You must develop the genius to discover talent among ourselves, to organise it with a

view to open out new careers for yourselves, and to add the innocent and elevating amusement and happiness of the Nation.

At the other end, lie the vast problems of village reconstruction, economic improvement, and organisation of the trade, commerce, and banking of the country. I grant that, in these spheres, you cannot do much without the State taking the initiative and helping you. But even here, it is open to the more enterprising and adventurous among you to settle down in a village with a small capital and gradually win your way into the hearts of the villagers and make yourselves so useful to them, that will gladly maintain you above want. This is not the place for me to elaborate the details of the plan. But if your Congress takes up this suggestion seriously and appoints a Committee to work out detailed plan, I shall be glad to co-operate with you.

I should like you, while you are young, to devote particular attention to the physical culture of your bodies. There cannot be real beauty without strength. I should like to make a particular appeal to young women who are flocking to our colleges, to take special care of their bodies and their appearance. They dare not ignore them. I cannot lay too much emphasis on the need for all our young people to take regular physical exercise, and to play games and sports .....

I sincerely hope that you will help to maintain.

that reputation. India has won world-wide fame, in the many games also. It is the 'special' province of youth to look to those activities. The international status of India must be raised by you in this as in other fields.

I should also like you to cultivate the spirit of healthy intellectual curiosity. You are all educated, but how many of you know the things which an educated person ought to know? How many things do you know even in this city? How many of you have the spirit of adventure? Thanks to Man's challenge to nature, the North Pole and the South Pole have been explored. The whole earth is now known to man. Air is being conquered. The depth of the sea have been plumbed. The Alps have been subdued, and the Himalayas are being attacked. Day after day, we read accounts of great adventures of heroism. How many Indian young men, how many Madrassés particularly, have taken their share in this conquest of nature? I invite you to do your bit. I want that you should organise expedition of walking, cycling, mountaineering. You should see new countries and new people. You will acquire confidence in yourselves that will add to your happiness and make you better men and women. You should also cultivate definite hobbies. Nature is so plentiful in our country that, with a little endeavour and with a little land, all of us may become fine gardeners. Gardening is a great hobby. To assist in any manner in the

creation of the beauty in flowers and leaves and fruits is great happiness. It will add to the stock of your knowledge. Incidentally, it will make you do physical work in your own gardens. No, enthusiastic gardener can help this. It is good for your bodies. I would also suggest that, as many of you as can, should cultivate the hobby of music, vocal or instrumental. All of us are gifted with that talent. But I am told that a good number of us can learn music, vocal or instrumental, with endeavour and application. Music hath charms to sooth the savage beast. Life can be made more tolerable even for the most unhappy among us with a little music thrown in. Music, as a social factor, has limitless possibilities. The rich store of our folk-songs and folk-dances lies almost unexplored. Our education, to-day, especially of the young ones, is often drab and lifeless, because music is not assigned its proper place. Life in our country is not so sweet as it may be or as it was, because music has not yet come by its own. I recognise that there is a passion often unhealthy, to listen to music from others, of almost any kind. But the true enjoyment of music which belongs to a cultured mind is yet to be created among us. We should musically educate ourselves to appreciate good music, more, we should learn the art of communal singing. In the West, it is very usual to see hundreds, and sometimes thousands of people, men, women and children singing popular songs together, with a striking unity of purpose and of voice. We need to cultivate that

communal singing in our country.

You can think, for yourselves, of other hobbies. I need not mention them to you. But before leaving this subject, I should like to commend to all of you one need which you must always fulfil. viz., to be, and to appear clean in your bodies, in your clothes, and in your habits. We in India, have been rightly famed through the ages of our personal cleanliness. It is a rich heritage, I want to conserve it, develop it, and hand it down untarnished, to those who come after you. But this is only a part of the picture. The other and the more important part is how to keep our country clean. Thanks, to the sun and to plentiful water, most of the year our villages have not all of them been spoiled. But our towns including the city of Madras, have to wage a perpetual warfare everyday, between the habits of our people and the municipal services. Our streets and our lanes are a standing disgrace to us. I speak frankly, because I feel strongly. We who claim to be educated must set a better example. The habits of throwing rubbish into the streets at all hours, and of fouling them in a manner which I dare not describe here, are as much standing in the way of our development, as anything else. There can be no higher mission or greater work before you, than to develop the sanitary and the civic conscience of our people. It is hard, often thankless, work. But the reward is great—beautiful cities and towns where

men, women, and children can live moral, healthy lives.

In order to do all this, however, you must become well-equipped not only in body, as I have told you already, but in mind. A vacant, unreceptive mind has yet done nothing for itself or for others. I want you all to study wide and deep to acquire knowledge, habits of careful thought and above all a capacity for intellectual honesty and courage. There is too much of the praise of youth, as mere youth. But all being are young. The greatness of men is that he can develop himself, to an almost infinite extent. Youth is the most appropriate time for that expansion. I would appeal to you to make the best of your opportunities. You must cultivate be-times the habit of study. Books are the best companions. They give you all the information you want. To-day even among the educated classes, there is very little of actual study of serious books going on. Most of them read only newspapers in a scrappy manner. The rich realms of literature in Sanskrit, Tamil, Telugu and English are before you. I want you to roam in those realms, thereby you will make your lives richer and fuller, and you will become better, more useful, and more efficient citizens.

Incidentally I should like you to learn Hindi or Hindustani, which is bound to be the *lingua franca* of India. We shall require to learn English for many years to come, till Hindi takes its place, and even

after that as a useful modern language. But Indian Nationality can never become real or full, until we have a common Indian Language. Hindustani is pre-eminently fitted to take that place. If you take to Hindustani early enough, you will learn it.

While you are young, many problems will face you which you must try and solve to the best of your ability, especially in the social and the religious spheres. Religion is neither taught nor learnt. In the words of Swami Vivekananda, it is a matter of being and becoming. I have no desire to inflict a religious sermon on you. It is easy to be agnostic, perhaps easier to be atheistic. I would only beg of you to study your religious books carefully and prayerfully, to think of these problems earnestly, and to come to tentative conclusions which you should continually verify by your own experiences. I have often felt that it will be a very human and a very enlightening document, if we can get individuals to put down in writing their religious beliefs and experiences. I can only commend to you the method of continual introspection, and of faith where you cannot prove. Life and death are too mysterious to be explained on mere material hypothesis. True religion is wholly consistent with true service to humanity. Each one of you must find the synthesis.

In the social sphere, you will find many problems which you would like to solve by radical methods. I can give no categorical answer to these problems. The

problems of marriage, of property, and one social adjustment are many and complex, and each nation has evolved its own solution through the ages. No nation can claim the monopoly of having solved them wisely and soundly. We must readjust our society, but let us never forget that imitation is death, and that material prosperity is not the sole test for a society's success. Bearing these facts in mind, I should like you to discuss these problems among yourselves with sincerity and earnestness.

The phrase "Social Service" is to-day very much in the air. It connotes an excellent idea. It is good that young men and young women should feel for those, less fortunate than they, and should desire to do something to make the world a better place than they find it. But you must develop the necessary equipment for this service, lest you do more harm than good. The poor in all countries, and especially in ours, are very sensitive. If you desire to serve them, you must become one of them. I can give you no better example of this quiet and useful social work than that done by my friends, Mr. P. N. Sankaranarayana Aiyar and Srimati G. Visalakshi in Gokulam and in Aydhya Kuppam. Moreover, social service may well begin at home. There is an idea abroad, among our young women, that, because they go to school or college, it is beneath their dignity to assist their mothers or their sisters in their domestic work. That is a false and mischievous idea. If you



desire to learn to do real social service, please begin at home, and help those who are nearest and dearest to you, in sharing the drudgery of home work, and then you will learn the sweetness of real social service.

I have not so far touched on one of the most difficult contemporary problems facing the Youth in India to-day, viz., the attitude of youth towards his country. I unhesitatingly ask you all to be patriotic, and to love your country passionately. I realise the limits of political and economic nationalism. I realise the horrors of war, but I also realise that unless India becomes free and self-governing she cannot make her legitimate contribution to peace on earth and good will to all men. It is, therefore, right that all of you should concentrate your efforts on helping India to attain her freedom. To those of you, however, who are students, I have one word to say. To those who are undergraduates, I respectfully suggest that the best service they can do for their country is to concentrate upon their study and upon their play, so that they may develop sound minds in sound bodies. They should, of course, keep their ear and eyes open, discuss among themselves contemporary political questions, and exercise their patriotism in legitimate ways, like the cultivation of Swadeshi. But it is good for them and for active politics, that they should keep away from it, until they finish their study. The problem is different with those of you who are graduates. You

must make up your mind whether you are going to pursue your study, or take to politics. Make your choice but stick to it. Do not try to do both. All this, however, is subject to the ruling exception viz., that, in days of great political excitement, students will be students all over the world.

The Madras University is trying to build up a Union. I strongly commend the activities of the Union to the attention of students in Madras, especially its activity as a Parliament, where young men and young women may cultivate and develop their power of expression, of organisation, and of clean and bold thinking on contemporary problems. The Oxford Union is rightly famous for its work in these directions. In all democracies and in Indian democracy, the power of fluent, accurate and effective expression is to be very great. Democracy means Government by discussion. Discussion involves the power of expression. Only those who cannot speak affect to despise that art. If you desire to play leading parts in the public life of your country, I want you to cultivate this habit of expression.

But more important than this, is the capacity for clear and bold thinking on contemporary problems. Thanks to the Indian National Congress, to Mahatma Gandhi, and many others, people to-day in India have learnt and are learning the art of thinking and speaking boldly, though it may offend the powers that be. But the more difficult and the more necessary art of think-

ing and speaking boldly, in spite of what is believed to be "popular opinion," has yet to be cultivated. No man can be a leader in a democracy, unless he faithfully echoes public opinion. But he is a poor leader who never makes up his mind, and is content to be a mirror of others' opinions. Even popularity is not an end in itself. It is only a means to an end. I would, therefore, beg of you, to train yourselves to give a correct lead to your country men, even if it happens to involve loss of popularity for the time being. The phenomenal success of Mahatma Gandhi is due to this great trait in him and we should be poor followers of the Mahatma, if we do not follow him in this.

I have no desire to deal with contemporary Indian politics in this address of mine. I only desire to say that those of us who claim to be self-respecting Indians can have no lesser ambition for our country, than that she should be free and self-governing, even as other countries are. Let us also realise that freedom demands its price. When I was in England in 1919, I visited many homes and in almost every home, at least one man had died in the war, or been maimed or disabled for life. That was the price. England paid for her freedom once more, and, unless every Indian home is trained to give its price for India's freedom, it must remain a phrase. The fault is not in our stars but in us, that we are thus and thus. The Commander-in-Chief said the other day in the Council of State, "I venture to suggest in all humility,

that if Indian politicians will pay less attention to providing seats for Muslims, Sikhs, Hindus and untouchables and pay more attention to making India a Nation, it will immediately reduce the cost of Indian defence. If I remove one battalion of internal troops, immediately, there is a protest from the Provincial Government. We have to see that people do not get at each others' throats." This is very humiliating but I am afraid very true.

But, more than all this, there is one contribution which youth alone can make to the building of the Nation. Older men have become too infected with that poison, to give any hopes for us. Youth alone can save the nation from this poison. There can be no Indian Nation if we continue to think of ourselves as Hindus, Mussalmans, Non-Brahmins. High class or Low class. These social distinctions may have their place in domestic life. But unless caste and birth are eliminated as factors in public life, there is no hope for this nation. Let us also remember that the whole includes the part, and that until and unless the Indian Nation becomes free, self-governing and happy, no part thereof can really progress. All communal awards and settlements are miserable attempts to keep the Nation from its heritage, and to make as quarrel over trifles, forgetting the main goal. Youth must take it as its gospel to annihilate communalism from public life. You can annihilate it, however, only if you annihilate it in your own hearts. I want you all to.

think of yourselves as young men and women of India, and not as belonging to this caste or that caste, to this community or that community. Habit will make this easy, and your example may yet save the nation.

I will now conclude with an exhortation to you. In the crucial years of the war between 1914 and 1918, the young men and the young women of great Britain threw themselves heart and soul into the war, and several of them made the supreme sacrifice, with those inspiring words on their lips, "who lives if England dies? Who dies if England lives?" I can give you no more inspiring words. In all that you do now and hereafter keep these words on your lips, and in your hearts, and you will never go wrong. "Who lives if India dies? Who dies if India lives?"

(4)

\* Youth is essentially the period of highest activity and noblest aspirations. It is the transitional time when the emotions of a tender age blend harmoniously with the judgment of a dawning adolescence. Common aspirations enlivening their conduct impart a tone of fellowship and brotherhood rarely experienced in any other stage of life. Therefore it is that the youth movement seeks to interpret and express the longings of the younger generation of our country men, to take an active part in our national struggle.

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\* Mr. Trivikrama Rao's welcome Address at the Madras Youth Conference held on 16th Feb. 1929 in Gokhale Hall, Madras.

to contribute that measure of support and to develop at the same time that spirit of understanding which will bring harmony and efficiency into personal, social and international relations.

The newly awakened youth have begun to realise more than ever that for long ages a peculiarly unproductive, irrational turn had been given to their training and conduct. Free thinking, independent judgment and an unoppressed view of life had been denied to them because of established usage, hoary tradition, superstitious sentiments or a so-called elderly guidance. It is their challenge to convention and dogma that forms the soul and substance of their conduct and behaviour. The more objectively and analytically the sentiments of the new youth movement are translated into action, the more effectively would they function in their liberating purpose. The spirit and vitality of youth must not only be conserved but also directed into fruitful channels of humanistic endeavour.

The chairman remarked that it was not at all in the interest of the nation to advise the students to remain away from active political life. He said "it devolves on the youths to put forth the best of their talent and energy towards the task of reconstructing our political fabric and towards achieving for India a respected place in the comity of nations....."

"Young India must today judge for herself, her destination and destiny. Schemes of political advancement are kept before the country advocating different

modes of national emancipation. To my mind, there is one and only one ideal that must guide our aspirations and influence upon our conduct. We find ourselves today not merely as the inheritors of a rich and ancient culture but also as participants in an enlarged life of humanity seeking place, contentment and prosperity. Isolated life of India as such would imperil her future and stay back her precious contribution in the worlds' higher life. An indispensable condition to this flowering of her genius is freedom. So long as she lives a humiliated and emasculated career by remaining in subjection deprived of those inalienable rights of directing and shaping her destinies, that genius cannot blossom and thus cannot contribute towards the common riches of world culture. Her subjection is not only a national calamity but also a world disaster awaiting immediate redemption."

(5)

When we are to-day face to face with a great national struggle, advice is being given by some elders that students should eschew politics completely. If students should eschew it altogether, they will not be fit for any work. By entering into politics, I do not mean that when you are in colleges, when you are trying to pass examinations, you should become active politicians with us and that you should get into the

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\* Madras Youth Conference was held on the 16th February 1929 in Gokhale Hall, Madras, *Sri. T. Prakasam*, in the course of his Presidential address, said.

heated and excited atmosphere of the present political agitation always. Politics is nothing if you are ignorant people. It implies full knowledge of the condition of one's own country, if not the conditions of the outside world when I am addressing you on the question of politics, it is my desire that no student should be ignorant of the political and the economic conditions of the country: why should we find so much depression all around, in the Youth conferences or in other Political conferences?

The problem of the day is unemployment. What is it due to? When we appeal to you to be patriotic, to come and join the demonstrations, why should there be any trouble? If you have known the conditions of the country, if you have been taught in the schools and colleges anything of the economic conditions of your country, anything of the political working of the constitutions of your country, there is no need today to appeal to the youths of the country. If you have been studying about the revenue which the Government takes from the people, from the students for educational purposes and how much of the revenues are being utilized for the legitimate purposes of education, or cultivation and developing the industries, there would have been no difficulty on such occasions as these. If you had known that when a sum, nearly twenty crores is collected from a particular area and that only about half a crore had been spent for the benefit of that area during the last 30 years,



there would have been no trouble when such appeals are being made to the youths of the country and to the masses. Last year and the year before there was a fight between the Government of India and the elected representatives with regard to the exchange question, whether the ratio should be 1 sh. 6 d. or 1 sh. 4d. The Government has managed to get a success on that question. The loss sustained by the poor people and by our tradesmen is extending annually over more than one hundred crores. We have allowed and our leaders have committed serious errors in the past. There was for us an occasion to collect a crore of rupees, and if that had been spent in establishing one Central National Institute, where real education could be given to all students, we would have been able to do some service to the motherland. What is it that you are doing to solve the unemployment problem? The Government is not interested in doing anything in this direction. You have to face and solve the problem. You would have been able to solve it, if you had been given the right education, and if you had been told how many employments are there under the Government. If you had known the real state of affairs, you would have been thinking for yourselves even while studying in schools and colleges about your future careers. That is not the case now. Those friends of mine who non co-operated and have suffered miserably are again compelled by circumstances to come back and join the colleges today. That is

because they had no right education. I do not really understand why the Government should have the 'trifling' to propound rules for the guidance of the conduct of young men, when they do not take the least possible interest to see that the young men are provided for when they had passed out of the colleges. The present system of education has only made all of us fit for clerks' places. Politics, those people might not touch you. I only wish there is an opportunity for students to learn politics, and there is an institution where the young men should be taught all that is required for the equipment of their future lines. How else can you be fit? To say that students should not know anything of politics is, in my opinion very wrong. I would call it a crime to keep students in the constitution of their country. The unemployment question comes because you have been kept away from the knowledge required of you.

I do not agree with the sentiments expressed in the Presidential address given to another section of the Youth two days ago. His advice was that students should not get into politics, should not do anything which would displease the Government and the University authorities while giving that advice he asked those very students to present a welcome address to the Simon Commission. If it was his real belief that the students should have nothing to do with politics and that they should take his advice seriously, is it right that he should call upon them to get into the worst possible matter of the boycott of the Simon.

Commission and induce them to draft an address when the whole country is against that commission? This is a clear proof that it is absolutely necessary that they should know and enter politics, if not always at least on occasions like this when the unwanted commission is coming among us.

(6)

"As in my literary works you will find problems but no solutions, so also in my address you will find problem but no answer. It is for the Youth Associations to furnish an answer. This is the principle feature of my address. Let one thing be clear at the outset that an Youth Association is at least partly concerned with politics, it is no use denying. This is one of its functions. The Bengal Provincial Conference is going to meet here two days hence. When the objective of both these bodies is about the same, what is the necessity of holding the separate Youth Conference? Though the two bodies have much the same exterior, when we look from inside the difference is very great indeed. The Congress is old like myself, The Youth Conference is young and pure hot blood still flows down its arteries, as it were. The Congress is the true resort of brainy men, lawyers and experienced politicians but the youth association is built up by intense earnestness and devotion of

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Sj. Sarat Chandra Chatterjee, the great Bengali story-writer and novelist, made these observations in the course of his Presidential address at the Bengal Provincial Youth Conference held at Rangpur on March 19, 1929.

youth. The former is guided by acute worldly wisdom, the other is propelled by natural spontaneity of life. That is why the independence resolution which was passed at the Madras Congress as a result of agitation and excitement was neither true nor natural. Owing to this reason it did not endure. Before a year passed, it was nullified. The Calcutta Congress once again demanded dominion status instead of independence, but the younger generation did not heed it.

Whenever I glance, I behold the redrays of youthful regeneration. Not only in politics but in social and economic sphere, there is a new awakening. They are now realising that without this well-nigh insoluble problems of the world can never be solved. The older generation sometimes reprimand them and say to the youth that they are inexperienced. Why do not the youths say in reply that their revolt is against the so-called experience.

But let me not be misunderstood. The Congress is only the national institution which does not submit to insult and opinion. In 1921, the Congress adopted non-violent non co-operation, the soul of which was Khadi and Charkha and Swaraj was promised by the 31st December. Inspiration came from outside Bengal but the number of men who went to jail, the quantity of Khaddar and the number of Charkhas and the number of sacrifices made in Bengal were without a parallel in India. How was this possible? Because, in all probability except the Punjab, no other province can

claim to a part of great love which the Bengal youths cherish for the country. That is why the "Bande-mataram" emanated from Bengal and in Bengal was born the great soul Deshbandhu.

The only hope lay in the youth of the country. They should take a leaf out of the anti-partition agitation when Bengal was entirely dependent on herself. The Political leaders might claim Swaraj on the basis of the misdeeds of the bureaucracy during the last 150 years. But the youths had a different standpoint. They would prefer independence to a dependent heavenly kingdom. To attain freedom, the price would have to be paid. Only the blood of Youth could furnish that price. In every country in the world the youths had achieved freedom. There could be no exception in the case of India.

There was one word which was floating in this atmosphere of India, namely, revolution. He wanted the youngmen to remember that in no country did the people seek revolution for the sake of revolution. Real revolution was in the soul of an individual. Political revolution was possible only when the ground had been prepared by revolutionising the merciless society, a loveless religion, existing communal and caste relations, economic inequality and heartless treatment towards womanhood. If any of them had a revolutionary bent, they would not probably like his words